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THE NEW YORKER

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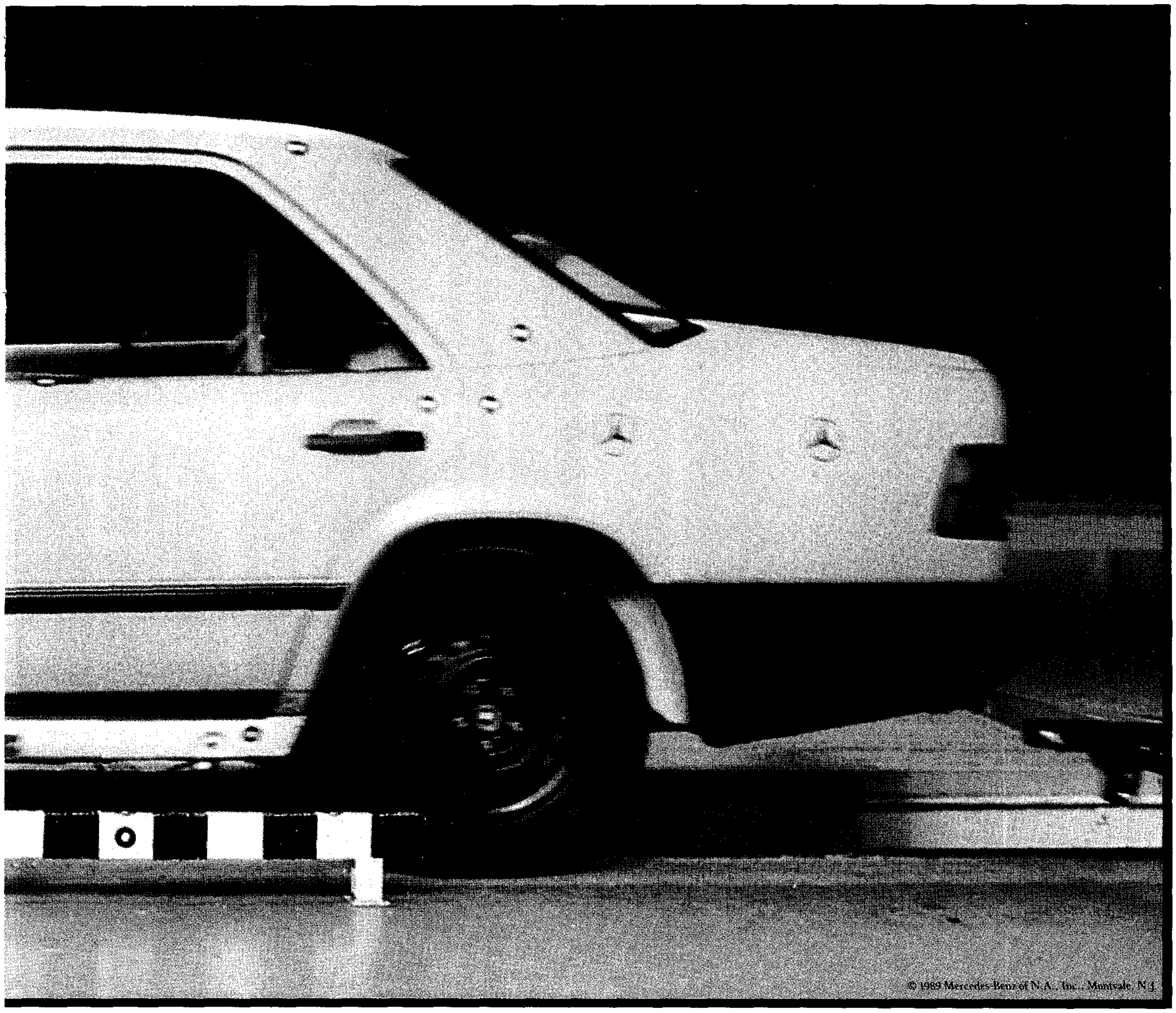

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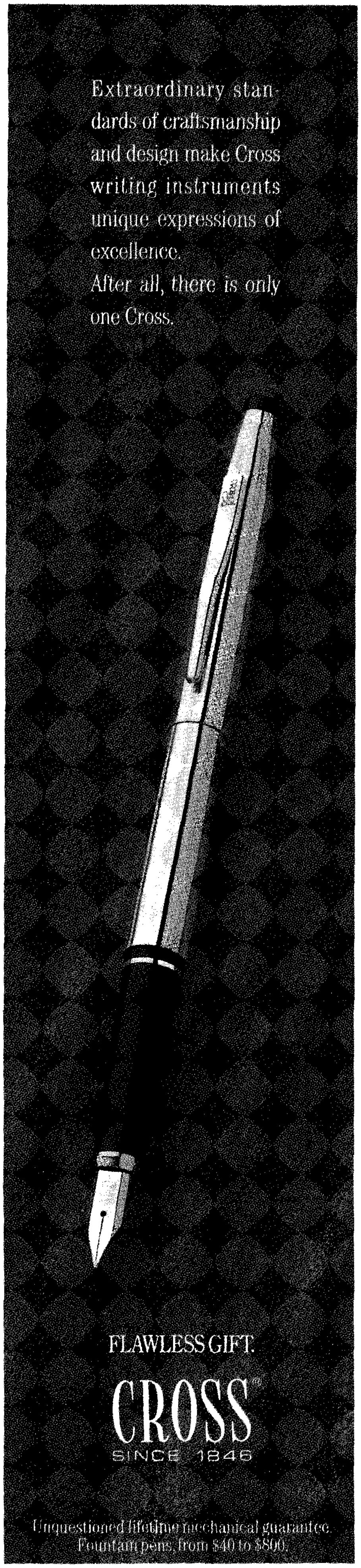
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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6	7	8	9			

CHARLES BUSCH'S new play, "The Lady in Question," appears to be the happening thing in New York theatre these days. Or so we gathered from the crowd that was milling outside the Orpheum Theatre on the night we went to see it, and the performance itself did nothing to offset that initial impression.

Originally produced by Kyle Renick at the WPA Theatre, "The Lady in Question" combines M-G-M glamour with Warner Brothers melodrama to burlesque those movies of the nineteen-forties in which a heroine of dubious character or reputation is put to the test—generally by the spectre of Nazism as embodied by someone like Claude Rains or Conrad Veidt. In movies of this sort, what hangs in the balance about the heroine can be anything from a drinking problem (think of Ingrid Bergman in "Notorious") to a distressing habit of seeming friendly with high-ranking members of the Gestapo (think of Valerie Hobson in "Adventures of Tartu"). What are her loyalties, her priorities? Is she capable of putting the good of humanity before thoughts of herself? And what of her checkered past? In the case of Mr. Busch's title character, what's most "in question" about the lady is her sex, given that she's played by Mr. Busch.

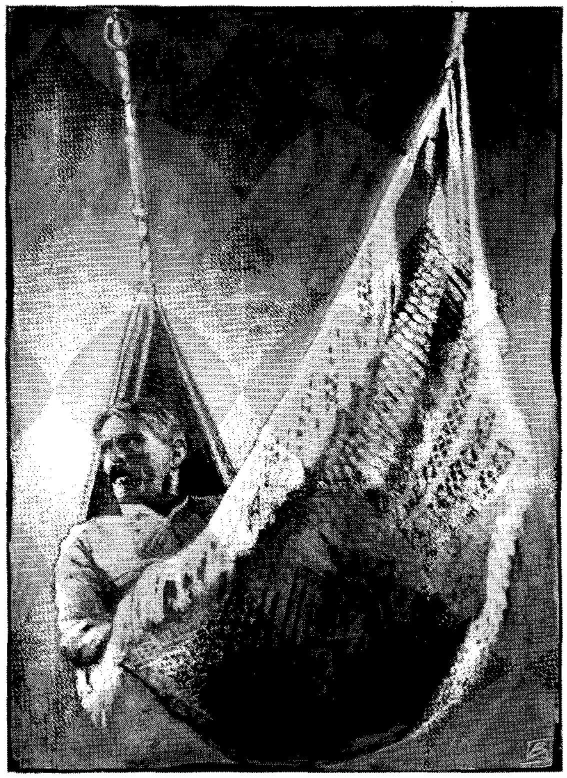
As performed by the Theatre-in-Limbo players—Andy Halliday, Meghan Robinson, Theresa Marlowe, Julie Halston, Arnie Kolodner (who gives new meaning to the term deadpan), and Kenneth Elliott (who gives new meaning to the term direction)—"The Lady in Question" is perfect summer fare, just as "Psycho Beach Party," Mr. Busch's last creation, was. But the new play seems less a sendup of any one movie or genre than an attempt to travesty a whole Zeitgeist or narrative mode. Or a whole costume collection: it's like a comedy sketch based on the career of Adrian. Or like an entire week's worth of TNT programming compressed into one evening of theatre.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedules and ticket information.)

BUZZSAW BERKELEY—A new musical comedy, conceived by Christopher Ashley and Doug Wright. The score and lyrics are by Michael-John LaChiusa, and the book is by Mr. Wright. The cast includes Ethyl Eichelberger and Keith Reddin. In previews. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

FESTIVAL LATINO IN NEW YORK—Opening performances of a three-week theatrical *celebración*, featuring plays from Latin America and the United States, which will run through Aug. 20. Unless otherwise noted, all performances are in Spanish, with simultaneous translation available on selected dates. The schedule: "The Great U.S. Cranial Circus," by Myrna Casas. Presented by Puerto Rico's Producciones Cisne, Aug. 1-6. . . . ¶ "No One Writes to the Colonel," adapted by Carlos Giménez from a García Márquez story. A production of Venezuela's Rajatabla Company, Aug. 1-5. . . . ¶ Two one-act musicals, "Adios, Tropicana" and "Peggy and Jackson" (both in English), offered by New York's Duo Theatre, Aug. 6-10. . . . ¶ "No More," a play with no dialogue, by Raul Osorio. Performed by Chile's Taller de Investigación Teatral, Aug. 8-13. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.) . . . **NOTE:** There will also be related film programs at the Public (Aug. 4-13) and at the Biograph Cinema (Aug. 6-19). For scheduling information, call 598-7155.



José Tejera in "No One Writes to the Colonel"

52ND STREET PROJECT—Presenting "You Can't Copyright a Title," a program of eleven short one-acts written especially for kids involved in the Project. The playwrights include Thomas Babe, Cindy Lou Johnson, and Willie Reale. (Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. 245-1350. Aug. 2-5 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

PRIVATES ON PARADE—Jim Dale and Simon Jones star in the 1977 musical by Peter Nichols (book and lyrics) and Denis King (score). In previews. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

SHENANDOAH—John Cullum reprises his original role in a revival of the 1975 musical, which was based on James Lee Barrett's 1965 film of the same name. Score by Gary Geld, lyrics by Peter Udell, and book by Mr. Barrett, Philip Rose (who once again directs), and Mr. Udell. Previews through Aug. 7. Opens Aug. 8 at 6:30. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

SWEENEY TODD—Bob Gunton and Beth Fowler in the York Theatre Company's production of the Sondheim musical, which had a brief run uptown last spring. Susan H. Schulman is the director. Previews begin Aug. 4. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

TITUS ANDRONICUS—The second, and final, offering in the New York Shakespeare Festival's summer series in the Park. Donald Moffat has the title role, Kate Mulgrew is Tamora, and Keith David is Aaron. Previews begin Aug. 4. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

WARD NO. SIX—An adaptation of the Chekhov story, presented by Moscow's Pushkin Theatre. In Russian, with simultaneous translation. (SUNY Purchase. 1-914 253-5900. July 31-Aug. 1 at 8:30.)

NEW THIS SEASON

ARISTOCRATS—Brian Friel's portrait of the family of Judge O'Donnell, of Ballybeg Hall, in Donegal, is witty, ironic, and loving. It is faultlessly performed by Niall Buggy (an astonishing actor who got his start at the Abbey Theatre), Peter Crombie, John Pankow, Kaiulani Lee, John Christopher Jones, and Margaret Colin, among others, under the direction of Robin Lefèvre. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/8/89.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-0102.)

BLACK AND BLUE—An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (2/6/89, under Dancing.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

THE HEIDI CHRONICLES—Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, led by Joan Allen and Boyd Gaines. (12/26/88) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

A HOT MINUTE—A musical revue, conceived by Melanie Mintz, about backup singers and their aspirations toward the big time. With Vivian Cherry, Pattie Darcy, Jon Fiore, Vicki Sue Robinson, and John-Martin Green. The show runs two nights a week, on Wednesdays and Thursdays, at 8 and 11, through Aug. 24. (Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. 228-6300.)

JEROME ROBBINS' BROADWAY—A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. The evening is an orgy of family entertainment, a display of theatrical arts and crafts, and a canonization of Robbins and his era. Whether the fifties was your generation or your parents', this is the show for you. (3/13/89, under Dancing.) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

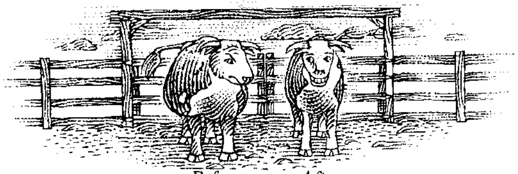
THE KATHY AND MO SHOW: PARALLEL LIVES—Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

THE LADY IN QUESTION—A comedy written by and starring Charles Busch and set in Germany during the Second World War. Directed by Kenneth Elliott. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

LARGELY NEW YORK—It would be a mistake to assume that Bill Irwin's dance-mime extravaganza is fundamentally boring because it lacks words; in fact, it has the best "book" on Broadway. The piece is partly a sendup of theatrical technology, partly a comment on the ills that beset a pluralistic society, and partly a debate about art. Irwin puts onstage all the conflicts, tensions, and antagonisms of modern city life and resolves them by means of an invented language. His solution is unrealistic—it obtains only in a theatre—but what makes the message so uplifting is that to understand it you have to learn a new idiom. (5/15/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

What's The Skinny On Beef?

Well, that's just it. The latest word on fat is less. Less at the ranch and less in the meat market. Which is remarkably good news for everyone who thought all they had to look forward to was poached blowfish. So start the charcoal or light the broiler. Because now, eating skinny doesn't mean you have to starve.



MEANWHILE BACK AT THE RANCH.

We haven't exactly been staring at the sagebrush while the rest of the world ran to aerobics class. Leaner breeding, skinnier feeding and closer trimming are making things definitely okay at the corral.

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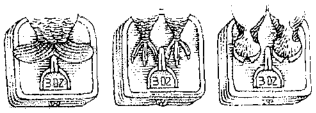

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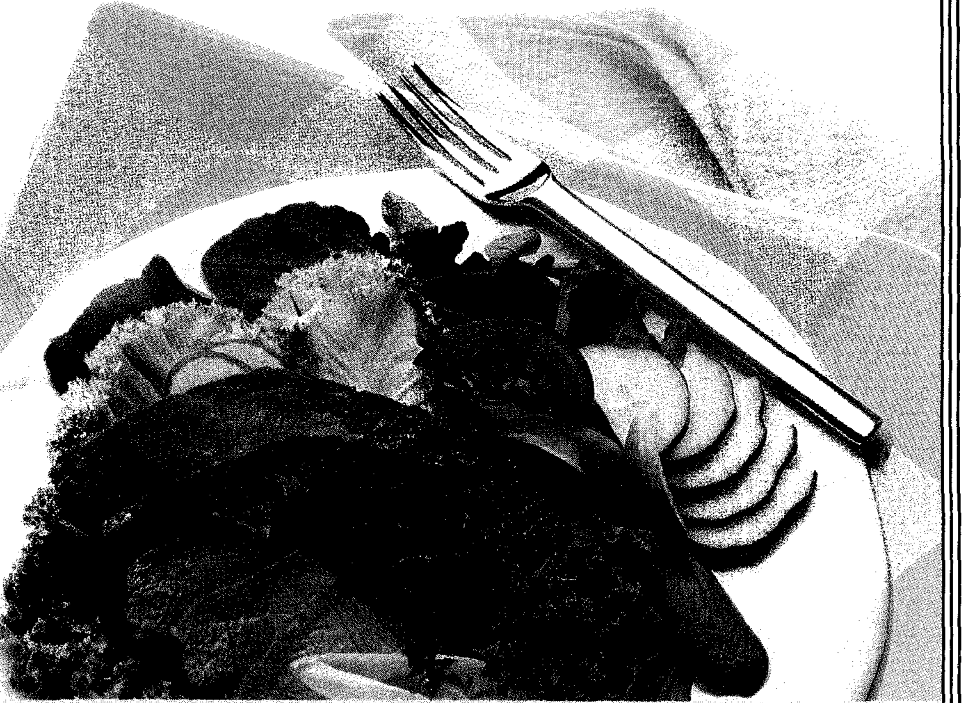
For a salad you won't wish was something else, toss in a few strips of tender sirloin along with the green stuff. P.S. It also works with leftovers.



BEEF

*Figures are for 3-ounce servings, cooked and trimmed.**
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(2.3 gms sat. fat)
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TOP LOIN
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172 calories

TOP ROUND
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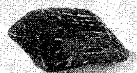

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TENDERLOIN
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(3.1 gms sat. fat)
174 calories

SIRLOIN
*7.4 gms total fat**
(3.0 gms sat. fat)
177 calories

THE THEATRE—Cont'd

Laughing Matters—This comedy revue by the team of Wallem and Tolan is so consistently unfunny that it borders on the offensive. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 564-8038.)

Lend Me a Tenor—The setting of this farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. Philip Bosco, Victor Garber, Tovah Feldshuh, J. Smith-Cameron, Caroline Lagerfelt, Ron Holgate, Jane Connell, and Jeff Brooks make up the splendid cast. (3/13/89) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Love Letters—Staged readings of A. R. Gurney's two-character play. July 31, Julie Harris and Richard Kiley; Aug. 6, Christine Lahti and Edward Herrmann; and Aug. 7, Swoosie Kurtz and Mr. Herrmann. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Mandy Patinkin in Concert: Dress Casual—A solo engagement, featuring the music of Berlin, Jolson, Sondheim, and others. With Paul Ford on piano. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 246-0102. Closes Aug. 19.)

Only Kidding!—Jim Geoghan's comedy about standup comedians, in all their panic and desperation, has the ring of authenticity, and jokes that invariably pay off. (One monologue, about a Greek restaurant, is a knockout.) (5/29/89) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Other People's Money—Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York stockbroker's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. Kevin Conway can seldom have been better or funnier than he is as Bronx-born Lawrence Garfinkle. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

The Pixie Led—A play by Christopher Harris, loosely based on two Gogol stories. Presented by Union 212, a British company. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Shirley Valentine—Willy Russell's play about a Liverpool housewife who, feeling herself engulfed by drab domesticity, flies off to Greece, where she finds a temporary lover and lives happily ever after. With Ellen Burstyn in the title, and only, role. Directed by Simon Callow. (2/27/89) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

NOT A PRAYER

Protests have not been heard over the demolition, in the past few months, of Kennedy Airport's Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish chapels. It's easy to see why the chapels are unlikely to be mourned. Awkwardly sited in a sea of cars, dwarfed by such ambitious temples to air travel as the T.W.A., Pan Am, and American Airlines pavilions (the last boasting the world's largest stained-glass window), the chapels cast a faint gloom in a place where the very idea of the need for prayer is not good for business. Moreover, the World's Fair-modern designs of the chapels made them look like buildings for three more rival airlines, rather than an affirmation of the freedom of religious choice. And what if your route wasn't mapped out by one of the Big Three?

Apparently, the chapels stood in the way of major construction—an interim interfaith house of worship has been set up in the International Arrivals building—and we've heard that hardly anyone used them anyway. But in the end underuse was what made these chapels divine. Even with all the buildings' problems there was a touch of grace in the fact that the center of this bustling airport was a cluster of places thronged only by angels.

LONG RUNS

anything goes: This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Leslie Uggams, Bill McCutcheon, and Gregg Edelman, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **a chorus line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **the cocktail hour:** A dramatist returns home to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more engaging. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Closes Aug. 20.) . . . **driving miss daisy:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **the fantasticks:** The longest-running long run recently turned twenty-nine. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **forbidden broadway 1989:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Dorothy Kiara, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **i could go on lip-synching!:** This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556.) . . . **into the woods:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. The cast includes Ellen Foley and Chip Zien. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363.) . . . **m. butterfly:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with John Rubinstein and B. D. Wong. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.) . . . **me and my girl:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **les misérables:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **the phantom of the opera:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **rumors:** This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has written. It is acted to perfection by Ron Leibman, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **steel magnolias:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)

DANCE

Coming out of the Met into Lincoln Center's plaza one recent evening, we heard live music pouring from the Fountain Café. Then we spotted an arrangement of old street lamps and new theatrical lights around a bandstand near the café bar, so we stepped over for a closer look at what turned out to be "Midsummer Night's Swing" (continuing on August 1, 3, and 4, from 9:30 to 11:30). On the bandstand a musical ensemble, here led by the drummer Bob Rosengarden (bands change nightly), was working over an arrangement of "New York, New York," while around the group, on a checkered floor, couples of many ages were kicking up their heels in various versions of the Lindy. After a whistle-stop tour of "San Francisco" and "Chicago," the band took five, and someone put on hit records of big bands from the forties. Most of the dancers took a break as well, but two couples who kept on trucking quickly drew an appreciative audience. In one couple, the woman was the flashy partner, stepping in complex patterns with the vigorous, pinpointed attack we associate with Latin dances. This was the hot style of swing, gregarious and direct. In the other couple, the man held the picture, expertly sending his partner in whatever direction she fancied, all the while seeming to sail on his own private Hovercraft over deep blue seas. This was the cool style of swing, reflective and oblique. We noticed that both couples seemed to dance in perfect time to the music, even though they were moving to different levels of rhythm—high-strung and pattering for the hot couple, looser and more resilient for the cools. We also noticed that the audience couldn't help tapping a foot or jiggling a knee in sympathy. By the time the band got back, most of the observers had crossed over to the dance floor. The band lifted their instruments, and the crowd formed couples and took the dance position. They were in the mood.

IN TOWN

London Festival Ballet—Final performances of the engagement. July 31-Aug. 2: "Études," "Land," and "Anastasia." . . . ¶ Aug. 3-4 at 8, and Aug. 5 at 2 and 8: "Napoli." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

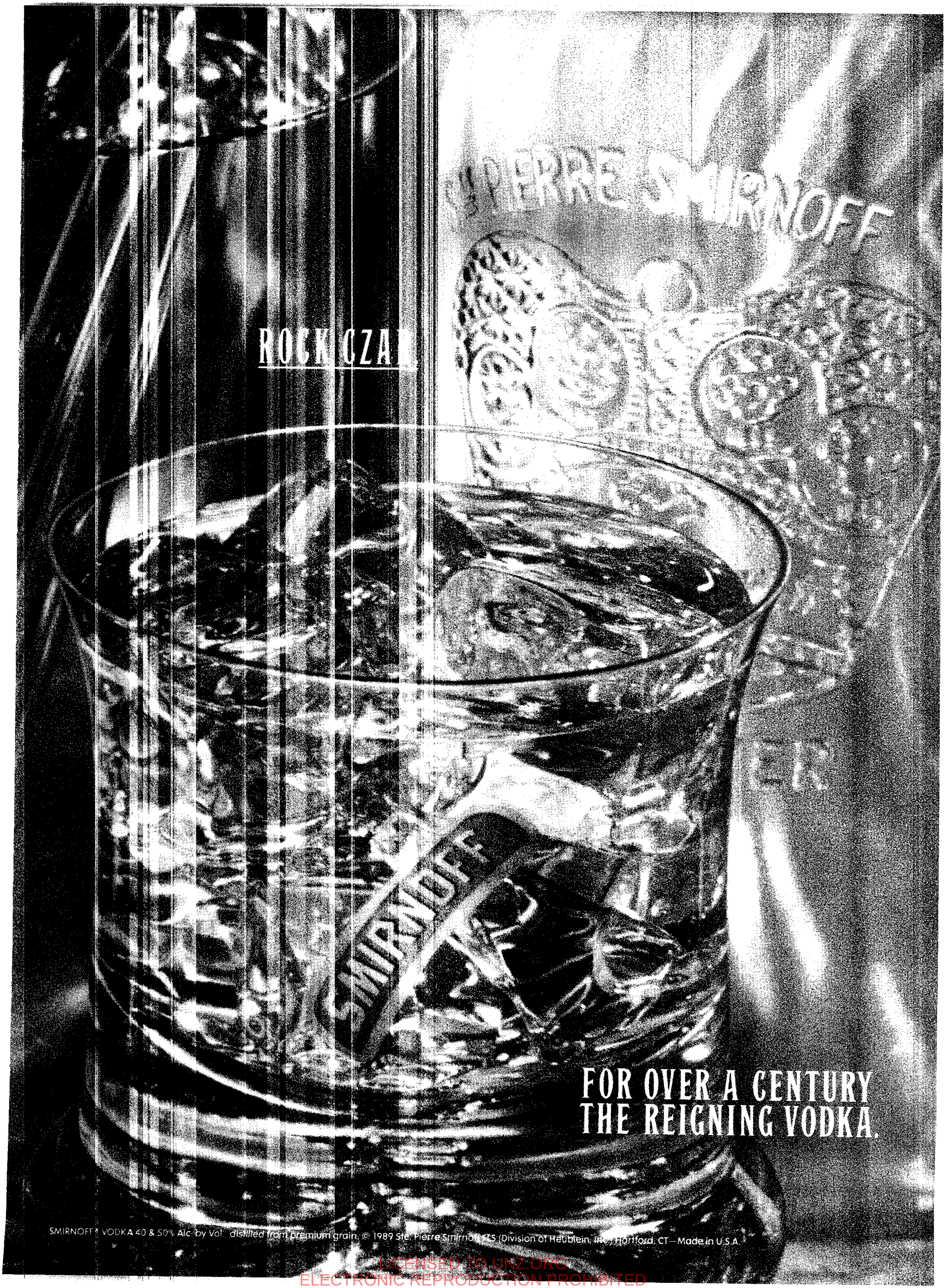
Feld Ballet—The first four performances in a one-week engagement. Aug. 7-8 at 8: "Ah Scarlatti" (preview), "The Gods Amused," "Kore," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Aug. 9 at 8: "Excursions," "Medium:Rare," "Danzon Cubano," and "Skara Brae." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through Aug. 12.)

Pilar Rioja—In "Café de Chinitas," "La Farruca," "Sonata," "Tres Danzas de Surinach," and other works. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Aug. 7-9 at 8. Through Aug. 13.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—Aug. 1-5: The American Indian Dance Theatre and two Hawaiian dance groups. . . . ¶ Starting Aug. 8: Ballet Chicago, directed by Daniel Duell. (Becket, Mass. 1-413 243-0745.)

Saratoga Performing Arts Center—Aug. 3-4: The Copasetics. . . . ¶ Aug. 5-6: Pilar Rioja. . . . ¶ Starting Aug. 8: The Hubbard Street Dance Company. (Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 1-518 587-3330.)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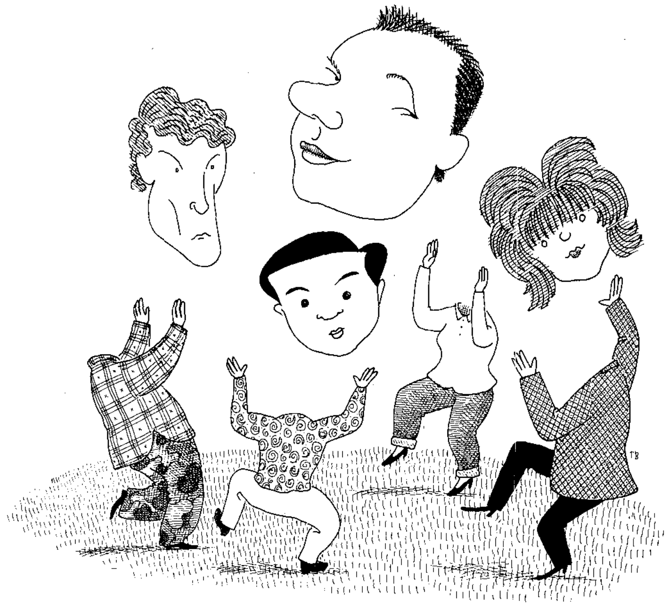
NIGHT LIFE

THERE'S usually a good reason to go to the Ritz, but there's almost always a better reason to stay away. Even leaving aside its new midtown address—the sort of neighborhood you wake up in after you've been kidnapped—there's still the club's distressing pack-them-in, get-them-the-hell-out management tactics, and the fact that the atmosphere there, on any given night, is something between that of a high-school gym class and a police state.

That said, a lot of must-see bands play at the Ritz. The weekend of August 4 begins with this summer's only New York City appearance of the Pixies—a grungy, beguiling, positively out-there thrash band founded a few years back by two U. Mass.-Amherst dropouts. The Pixies are led by the singer-guitarist Black Francis, an improbable-looking twenty-four-year-old with something of a paunch and a penchant for shouting in Spanish. The group's recent "Doolittle" album is typically manic-depressive—"La La Love You," "Wave of Mutilation"—but it's a fine, inventive piece of work that has made the Pixies the band of the moment.

Todd Rundgren, who performs at the Ritz August 5-6, has never quite had his moment, but he's stuck around anyway. Rundgren's solo career began back in the eight-track days with a handful of cloying pop hits, some of which—"We Got to Get You a Woman," "Hello, It's Me"—you can still hear on the radio when you're looking for a *good* station. Today, Rundgren is a formidable cult figure, and rock journalists like him so much that they call him Todd. Aside from his considerable string of producer credits, he has just released one of his once-in-a-decade records, an album that everyone agrees is exceptional, the punchy white-soul offering "Nearly Human." Rundgren's a far cry from the Pixies, of course—it's going to be a surf-and-turf weekend at the Ritz.



Pixies at the Ritz

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant, where wicker baskets overflow with fruit and vegetables and a row of Serrano hams hangs over the bar; if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. **JOHNNY RAY,** the big-emotions singer who sang "Cry" in the fifties, starts a three-week engagement here on Aug. 1.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—On the back wall of this jazz club there's a neon version of the Manhattan skyline, with a crescent moon and two stars attendant upon it—one of the best examples of inert-gas folk art we know of. **HUBERT LAWS** and his flute will be here Aug. 1-6. **KOKO TAYLOR,** the Chicago-blues belter who sings "You Can Have My Husband, But Don't Take My Man," starts work on Aug. 8; not recommended for the fainthearted. Music from nine. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A crowded, duskily lit neighborhood bar, where pianists, bassists, and, occasionally, drummers compete for your ear with professional conversationalists. Truth and beauty usually prevail. Pianist **HAROLD MABERN** teams up with bassist **JAMIL NASSER** through Aug. 5; **JOHN HICKS** leads a trio on Aug. 6; and **RICHIE BEIRACH'S** trio claims Aug. 7-9. First set at nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Pretty much everything about this jazz room is nice: the long rows of tables covered with pink linen, the bijou bandstand, the view from the bar of the bandstand, and the view out the window of Vaux & Withers' gabled Gothic courthouse. Blues and jazz singer Jean DuShon performs nightly, except Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—This room, which caters to young thrash-metal buffs and cooler heads on weeknights, opens its doors on Sundays to swing-music fans, most of whom come to Lindy. Feet jitter, skirts twirl, and smiles break out everywhere. The New York Swing Dance Society organizes these gatherings, and on Aug. 6 it presents the Harlem Blues & Jazz Band, an eight-piece outfit that includes such swing-era notables as tenor saxophonist **GEORGE KELLEY,** trumpeter **BOBBY WILLIAMS,** and guitarist **AL CASEY.** Activities start at around eight.

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Hipsters, punks, posers, N.Y.U. students, the occasional skinhead—a typical East Village bar. The motif is prehistoric punk—there's a Stone Age mural, assorted toy dinosaurs and pterodactyls, and a bartender who, on a recent evening, was sporting a T-shirt that read "Die, Yuppie Scum." The schedule, in part: July 31, the Senders and the Soul Assassins; Aug. 3, the False Prophets; and Aug. 7, the Waldos. Shows start at around ten. Dining.

Dan Lynch, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—Outside Dan Lynch, you'll come across a lot of suspicious characters who'll claim to know you; inside, you'll find a variety of live blues, including vamps of the "put on your red dress" variety.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—An Irish bar, way out on the Western edge of town, where the great potholed boulevards turn to cobblestones, and the world across the Hudson flashes its come-hither signs. August is "button-accordion month," with a different accordion ace every Friday night. John Nolan will do the honors on Aug. 4, accompanied by Maureen Glynn on piano and fiddle. Sets at nine and eleven.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through a heavy-duty steel door, through a green Plexiglas door, down a long, narrow, fun-house passageway (mirrors in which you can watch yourself multiply; corrugated-metal siding you can riffle), and down a flight of stairs, you'll find this velvet-and-mirror-walled *boîte*. **EDDIE HARRIS,** the saxophonist and tinkerer—he sometimes plays a trumpet with a sax reed or a sax with a trumpet mouthpiece—is in control Aug. 1-6; guitarist **CHARLIE BYRD'S** trio takes the stage on Aug. 8. Mondays are set aside for guitarist **LES PAUL,** who was known as Rhubarb Red back in the twenties and thirties, when he was an itinerant country picker. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—The kind of classy place where no sooner do they give you a plate than they take it away. Fortune Garden is decorated for a greenhouse effect, and the priorities here are Chinese food, hanging plants, and jazz. **DOROTHY DONEGAN,** the jazz iconoclast who says she took up the piano to avoid housework, has a week-long gig Aug. 1-6. In the forties, rumors spread that the young Donegan could play faster than Art Tatum, and when Tatum went to Chicago to check her out he was impressed enough to offer this bit of advice: "If it don't fit, don't force it." Singer **JANE HARVEY** comes in with some able accompanists—**BILL MAYS** (piano) and **JAY LEONHART** (bass)—on Aug. 7; and pianist **DAVE MC KENNA** has a six-day run beginning Aug. 8. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

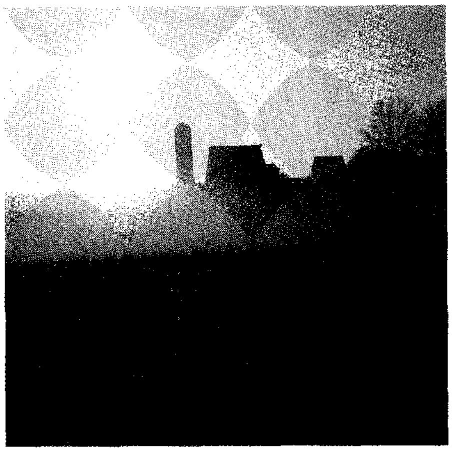
Indigo Blues, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A modernist night spot in the basement of the Hotel Edison. There's a glass-brick reception area, an oval blond-wood bar, and other interior-design novelties. The lighting—blue neon, in laserlike strips and wide halos—works on the eyes like a long day in front of the PC. Marcus Roberts, a pianist with Monk and Ellington on his mind, will lead a quartet here Aug. 1-6. Music after nine.

Jan Wallman's, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A cozy room for singers and their followers, cheek by jowl with the Iroquois Hotel. At the microphone: Richard Holbrook (Aug. 2), Susan Greenberg (Aug. 3), Alex Bennett Kahn (Aug. 4), Barbara Lea (Aug. 5). Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Turn-of-the-century New York Sunday *Herald* posters and Hirschfeld caricatures on the walls, and, next to the brass-railed partition between the bar and the dining room, a modern Steinway. Pianist **JOHN HICKS** works with bassist **DON PATE** Aug. 1-5; **MICKEY TUCKER** and **REGGIE WORKMAN** succeed them starting Aug. 8. **PHOEBE LÉGÈRE,** whose assorted talents (she plays piano and accordion, has a voice of impressive size, and does campy variations on a red-hot-mama theme) have made her a favorite in both downtown and uptown spas, will be on view Sundays; Five Play lays claim to Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A cheery, climate-controlled restaurant and bar featuring a load of snazzy Gibson guitars, some Washington Square-style portraits of folks like Bo Diddley and Dr. John, and funky French fry–potato chip hybrids. The Roadhouse is now the only Lone Star in town, and a bleary-eyed patron here was recently heard remarking, "I don't know about you people, but I'm feeling a lot of love in this room." The Rhode Island collective **ROOMFUL OF BLUES** will be here Aug. 2; **WILLY DE VILLE,** an R. & B. front man who grew up on 2nd Street between Avenues C and D, performs on Aug. 4; and the **UPTOWN HORNS** come in on Aug. 5. Music after nine. Dining.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the "Hoboken sound" and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. Manhattanites who stay through the second set will need all their Scout training to get home, but the smell of the nearby Maxwell House factory may give them a boost. Happy Mondays and the Doughboys are here on Aug. 3, and Panther Burns headlines on Aug. 4.



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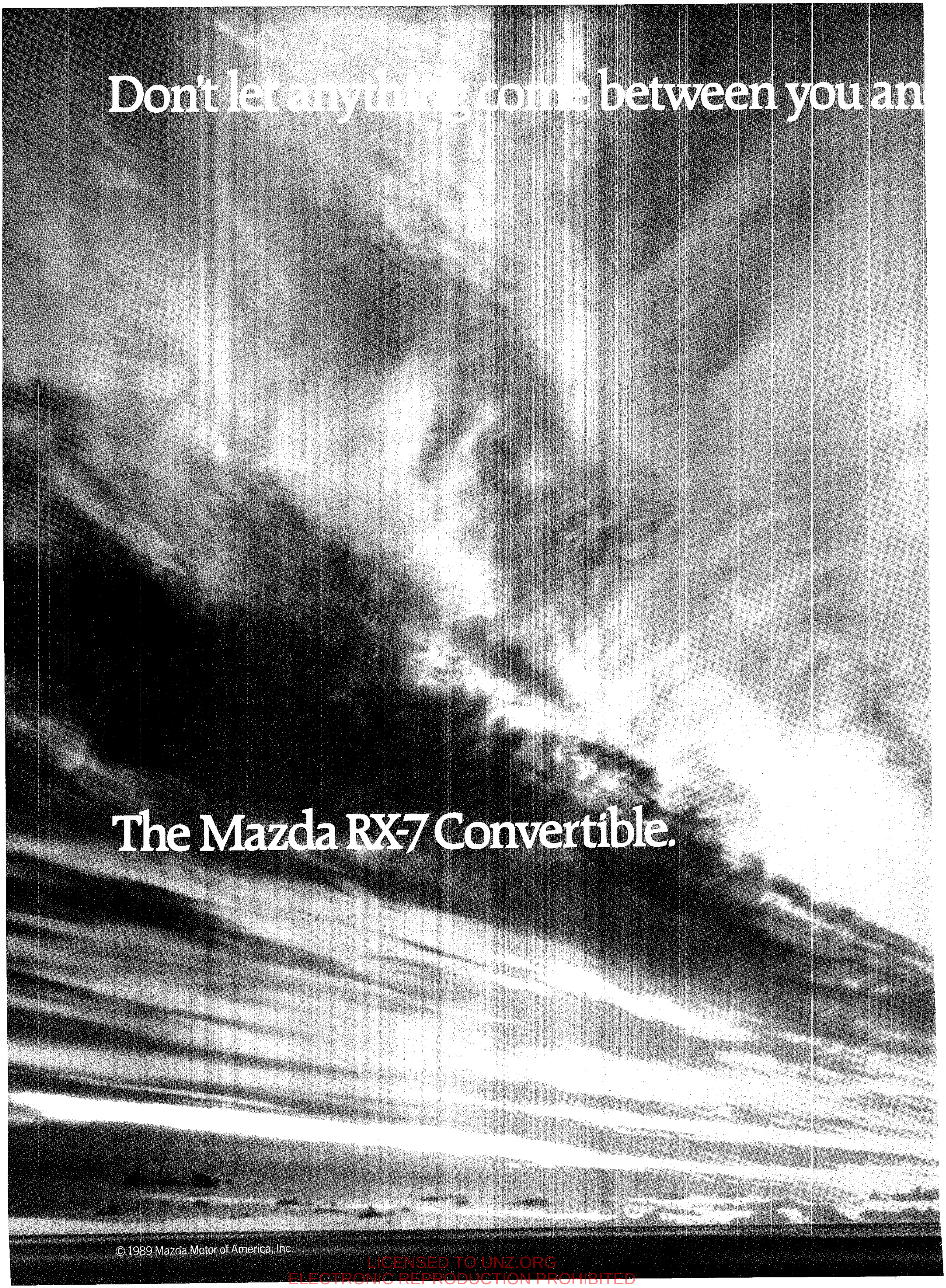
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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Henry VIII and a unicorn on the walls, well-heeled cats on the banquettes, and a jazz and R. & B. double bill—**THELMA CARPENTER** and **HADDA BROOKS**—on the bandstand. Carpenter was singing in Count Basie's band in the forties ("I Didn't Know About You," etc.)—about the same time that Brooks was lighting her torch for Hollywood. Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A new, shiny, ninety-seat cabaret, sixty-five floors above all the honking and shouting. (It and the neighboring Rainbow Room—same telephone number, same stratospheric prices—are reached by taking a whistling express elevator; some people observe silence on the way up.) On clear nights you can see the lights of Yonkers and Tenafly. Theodore Bikel, who'll perform through Aug. 12, has a somewhat varied résumé: he has sung in five languages, performed in the Broadway incarnation of "The Sound of Music," and served as a delegate to the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

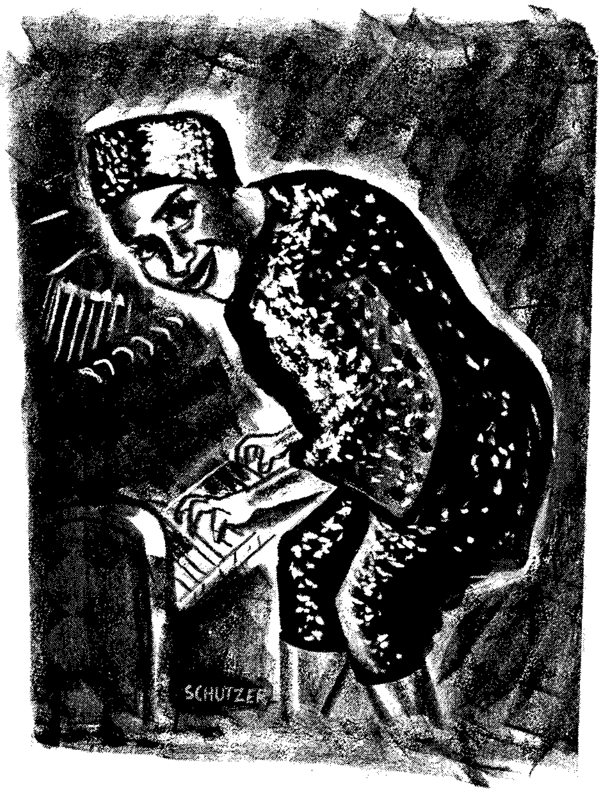
Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This rock establishment, which recently moved from the East Village to the former temple of excess Studio 54, is still a place where the customer is not always right. The signature feature of the previous address, the giant Big Brother video screen, has been preserved intact. Upstairs in the balcony, there are designated seating areas for industry and non-industry people. On Aug. 3, the club will celebrate rock and roll with Tiny Tim, Herman's Hermits, Donnie Brooks, and Otis Day & the Knights, to name a few. The **PIXIES** perform on Aug. 4, and **TODD RUNDGREN** comes in Aug. 5-6. Shows begin at nine Mondays through Fridays, and at ten Saturdays and Sundays.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—This former luncheonette has a tropical motif—straw huts, bamboo, a fake palm tree, a mosaic of gourds—and the city's most international booking policy: Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean are just a few of the places explored. There's ska on Aug. 2, with the Skatalites and the Toasters; Afro-Caribbean funk on Aug. 4, with **MIKATA;** and Afro-pop on Aug. 5, with Remmy Ongala & Orchestre Super Matamila. Algeria's Cheb Mami makes his U.S. début Aug. 8-9. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A convivial and crowded jazz club—but not so crowded, as Yogi Berra said of another night spot, that nobody comes here anymore. Pianist **TOMMY FLANAGAN** and his trio stop in for a visit Aug. 1-6; **ABDULLAH IBRAHIM & EKAYA** get under way on Aug. 8. Ibrahim, an expatriate South African pianist, saxophonist, and flutist, serves up a bluesy, polyphonic mix of Monk and gospel and traditional African music. Mondays belong to the electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans. Shows from ten. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—One of the few places below the surface of New York that deserve landmark status. It's also one of the few places anywhere that have a notable (if that's the right word) light fixture—one that Charles Mingus K.O.'d while trying to reason with the late Max Gordon, and that Mr. Gordon, who was a preservationist as well as a businessman, decided to leave in Mingus-ized condition. **KENNY BURRELL,** a guitarist who has sat in on about two hundred recording sessions, will be here with his quartet Aug. 1-6. Tenor saxophonist **DAVID MURRAY** brings in a quartet of his own for the week beginning Aug. 8. Mondays are in the hands of the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music after ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy, awninged eateries you've seen nestled between brownstones in the Village and always wondered about. The décor is peach-inclined and the jazz emanates from a passageway between a front-room bar and a back room reserved for trenchermen. **ADAM MAKOWICZ,** the Czech pianist who threw over Chopin in favor of Tatum, performs with bassist **GARY MAZZAROPPI** through Aug. 5. Beginning Aug. 7, pianist **JOHN BUNCH** takes over, with bassist **STEVE LA SPINA.** Music weeknights from eight. Closed Sundays.



Dorothy Donegan at Fortune Garden Pavilion

BLOCK PARTY

"Criminals Beware: We Are Watching You" warns the blood-red banner stretched all the way across 14th Street just east of Sixth Avenue. What a perspective when there's so much else to see, some of it consistent with the banner's vigilantism: shiny silver-and-black jungle-print cloth at Jonas's Anniversary Sale-a-Thon; two battery-operated commandos crawling on their bellies across the sidewalk, their rifles pointed at a toy frog swimming laps in a stainless-steel mixing bowl outside USA Audio World; and, of course, all the uniformed bodies reposing in jeeps outside the National Guard's armory. But there are also the colors of tamarindo, berry, and guanábana syrups in big glass bottles at the shaved-ice stand; trays of churros, three for a dollar; learned tomes lined up neatly in the window of University Press Books; wigs cascading out of a doorway next to Shaw's Auction Outlet; and Woolworth's, its ground floor permeated with the same scent of candy we remember from when our grandmother took us to a Woolworth's store thirtysomething years ago.

Hey, Big Brother—open your eyes.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

Judy Garland used to sing about it, but you never saw her having to cope with no business in show business. Unfortunately for Millie Jackson, she got plenty of practice at her recent engagement to promote her new album, "Back to the S - - t." (Dashes are provided by the record label; Miss Jackson has no problem filling in the blanks.) When Jackson walked onstage for her third night's late show at Indigo Blues, behind her was a blazing fanfare of eight musicians and three backup singers—and in front of her were about fifteen people.

It's not simply for a fashion statement that Jackson sports a T-shirt depicting a fowl creature brandishing a bazooka and spouting the words "Don't Duck with Me!" After wailing through her first song as if she were playing before a packed house at the Beacon, she stopped and told a woman up front to put out her cigarette because it affected Jackson's singing. The woman pretended not to hear. There was no mistaking Jackson's second request. The woman countered by pointing out that there were ashtrays on the table. "What else are you supposed to do with them?" she asked coyly. Jackson gave her several suggestions, none of which involved nicotine buildup. Then, after asking for requests, she went into spirited renditions of obscure selections in her passionately sardonic way. ("This is the title cut of an album you didn't even know I made," she said when introducing one number.) Just as she was finally relaxing into this intimacy, a jitneyful of Finnish tourists, who were staying in the hotel above, ventured into the club and, innocently assuming that Millie and Co. were probably the house band, embarked on an evening of drinking and dancing, blithely foxtrotting during one of Jackson's heart-wrenching torches, then boogying down during one of her signature ribald R. & B. ditties. The singer bid her band to speed up, play double time, break into triple time. It was no use. The Finns just danced faster, leapt higher, screamed louder. They loved her, but they couldn't have cared less about her. Doubling over in laughter and amazement, Jackson asked them if they were planning on going dervishly wild all night. The answer was affirmative. "Good," Miss Jackson responded softly. "Then I'm getting the f - - k out of here." And she did.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Shimmer—A play by John O'Keefe about two boys who escape from a reformatory during the nineteen-fifties. The playwright has cast himself in every role. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 246-0102.)

P.S. 122—Aug. 3-6 at 9: "Salon de la Mer," a medley of performances by Holly Hughes, Lisa Kron, Carmelita Tropicana, and others. . . . ¶ Aug. 3-6 at 9:30: Monologues by Penny Arcade, in which she impersonates New Yorkers. Through Aug. 20. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

On Valentine's Day, 1929, Edward Hopper went to see Elmer Rice's play "Street Scene" and fell in love with the set, designed by Jo Mielziner. The following year, Mielziner's mother turned up as Hopper's summer neighbor in Truro, Massachusetts, and the influence of Mielziner's stage façade of tenement row houses found its way into "Early Sunday Morning" (1930), among the best known of Hopper's lonely settings and a textbook instance of American realism. The Whitney Museum bought the painting in 1931, and was rewarded for such quick responsiveness to the artist's work during his lifetime with the gargantuan Hopper Bequest, an estate of more than twenty-five hundred paintings, drawings, prints, and notebooks willed to the museum by Hopper's widow—another influential Jo—who died a year after her husband, in 1968.

It has since been the Whitney's duty to keep this legacy fresh, which must sometimes seem difficult. Hopper's style is one of the great immutables of American art. A taste for the pathos-beset naturalism that he soaked up at the theatre in the teens and twenties stayed with him throughout his career; in this sense, Hopper never outgrew his Blue Period. Furthermore, his classic evocations of mid-century American angst—the diners and the hotel rooms, the wordless couples and the clapboard cottages—are so photogenic, so Garbo-like in their emphasis on smooth planes and solitude, that they can be anticlimactic when experienced firsthand.

In its subtle, revealing new Hopper show (on view through November 5), the Whitney stresses the less familiar. Figure sketches from the early twenties, for instance, show us that Hopper was no great shakes as a draftsman. "Study for 'Morning Sun'" (1952), a preparatory drawing full of the artist's written color-scheme instructions to himself—"pink toes" hovers over the outline of the foot—may be ammunition for those who believe Hopper was essentially an illustrator. But we also find the young artist abroad and in the thrall of Impressionism, painting with a spontaneity that recurs in later works such as "Cobb's Barns, South Truro" (1930-33). And with "Young Woman in a Studio" (1901-02), an exquisite little painting in silvered grisaille, we find Hopper, our outstanding realist, as turn-of-the-century student aesthete.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A lovely display of Chinese landscape paintings from the Ming (1368-1644) and Ch'ing (1644-1911) dynasties. The exhibition indicates that the concept of "selling out" is hardly unique to the Warhol era: the Ming paintings contrast professional court painters, who were realistic and monumental, with amateur scholar-painters, who valued experimentation, the development of personalized style, and detachment from the worldly demands of officialdom. The show also demonstrates that abstraction is not a Western invention: the Ch'ing paintings display a high degree of it, with their flattened compositions, and exploitation of the "cinematic" panning inherent in the form of the scroll. Some of the Ch'ing ink-dot landscapes are positively Pollock. Through Aug. 27. . . . ¶ Thirty-six of Lucas Samaras's works on paper from the museum's collection are on view in the Berggruen Klee Gallery of the Wallace wing (the Klee works that are usually there are at the Tate Gallery for the summer). Through Sept. 5. . . . ¶ "Apropos Aprons," a presentation of the Costume Institute, considers not the workaday item but apron extremes—extremely ornate examples from eighteenth-century Europe, and the extremely short Rudi Gernreich mini (1967), not to mention the Egyptian noblewoman's funerary apron, and various loincloths, girdles, pinafores, and pendant sashes. Through Sept. 3. . . . ¶ An exhibition comparing photographs of the sixties with photographs of the eighties, including works by Duane Michals, Cindy Sherman, and the Starn Twins. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

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Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—Twenty-five sculptures and fifteen drawings by Christopher Wilmarth (1943-87). A compact and exceptionally discomfiting retrospective. The artist's green-glass structures from the late sixties and seventies are elegant but utterly mute. The late work—mostly bronze wall reliefs with ovoid etched-glass "heads"—offers about as despairing a vision of the self as you are likely to find. Through Aug. 20. (A complementary show is at Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.) . . . ¶ A Helen Frankenthaler retrospective, ranging from the artist's stained, vaguely Orientalist fifties paintings through her mid-sixties color-field work to some exquisite abstracts of this decade, such as "Casanova" and "Scarlatti." Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "California Photography: Remaking Make-Believe." An exhibition of forty-five recent works by John Baldessari, Nancy Barton, Jo Ann Callis, John Divola, Robert Heinecken, Larry Johnson, and Larry Sultan. All of the artists reside in California. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ Photographs by Aaron Siskind from the permanent collection. . . . **Note:** The museum's sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 10, with musicians from the Juilliard School performing at 7:30. (The museum is open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The current installation from the permanent collection emphasizes the museum's superb, specialized holdings in nonobjective European art, beginning with a detailed display of the fracturing of pictorial space that formed one of the major currents of early-twentieth-century painting: Cézanne, Cubism, Italian and Russian Futurism, and the Dutch De Stijl. There's also in-depth attention paid to Kandinsky, Klee, and Brancusi, a trio whose works form the fulcrum of the collection. On the museum's top spiral, a display of sculptures primarily by European artists attempts to impose direction on the Guggenheim's uneven contemporary collection. . . . ¶ Also on display, from the museum's permanent collection, is an enormous circle of red-slate fragments, assembled by the peripatetic English artist Richard Long—a poetic sort of walker. Long, who has a way of making atavistic practices speak to us in sophisticated terms, came to town last week to install four other pieces, two involving words and another his handprints. Through Sept. 3. (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A show of oils, watercolors, prints, and drawings by Edward Hopper. The hundred and fifty works span the artist's career, and are drawn from the museum's collection. . . . ¶ "Art in Place" is a thematically arranged show of three hundred works that have entered the permanent collection in the past fifteen years. They range from a 1901 watercolor by Maurice Prendergast to a 1988 aluminum sculpture by John Newman. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Whitney Museum Downtown, 33 Maiden Lane—"The Desire of the Museum": This provocative show, organized by student curators, presents the institution of "the museum" as a living entity, with its own set of desires and unspoken agendas. It does not include some of the better-known artistic examinations of the museum frame, by such artists as Claes Oldenburg, Marcel Broodthaers, and Michael Asher. It does feature a Marcel Duchamp piece, which contains reproductions of the master gamesman's ready-mades; Richard Artschwager's hairy rubber blips, which are strategically installed in unexpected locations; Hans Haacke's portrait of the extra-aesthetic life of Seurat's "Les Poseuses"; and Mark Dion and Jason Simon's tales of pictures that were badly damaged or painted and then economically revitalized through conservationist cunning. The curators try to push their point too far with gimmicky interventions (including die-cut questions beside the art works, such as "What does the museum want?"), but this show—which also includes Guerrilla Girls' posters, Allan McCollum's painted surrogates, Louise Lawler's photo wall labels, and more—is long overdue. Through Sept. 12. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Andrew Wyeth: The Helga Pictures." Through Sept. 18. . . . ¶ "Hispanic Art in the United States: Thirty Contemporary Painters & Sculptors." . . . Concurrent with the Hispanic show is a forceful lobby installation by Alfredo Jaar, a Chilean artist living in New York. It consists of light boxes that look like black beams edged in photographic transparencies of United States civil-rights protesters, including picketers carrying signs that read "I *AM* A MAN" and a young black man with part of his face done up in white makeup. The artfully haphazard arrangement of beams argues effectively for anti-authoritarianism in both life and art. Through Sept. 4. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A display of Saudi Arabian dress in which traditional *thawbs*, for instance, are seen alongside a cloak that belonged to King Faisal. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A show of furniture by George Nakashima, a woodworker who favors an organic approach to tables, chairs, cabinets, and lamps. Through Aug. 20. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—The most recent installation of works from the exemplary collection of John D. Rockefeller 3rd (the society's initial benefactor) highlights fine Chinese and Japanese porcelains, such as a grouping of small translucent celadon bowls and a large Ming water jar depicting fish swimming among aquatic plants. There are also Hindu and Buddhist sculptures, mostly from India, and particularly enthralling are several Khmer stone statues, with their idealized naturalism, classically smooth surfaces, and utterly placid serenity masking what was a brutal warrior society. . . . ¶ A display of thirty-five Korean porcelains provides a good, if somewhat cursory, introduction to delicate work made during the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910). Both shows through Sept. 3. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—Red Grooms: His work is about as close as art gets to real entertainment, and his graphic work—the subject of this exhibition—is no exception. Included are some delightful three-dimensional lithographs that resemble permanently opened pop-up books. Through Sept. 10. . . . ¶ Sculptor Mierle Laderman Ukeles is showing works made with recycled materials—crushed soda cans, pulped Christmas trees, and shredded Wella Balsam containers. Through Sept. 4. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Polished Perfection: The Art of Turned-Wood Bowls." In the nineteen-thirties and

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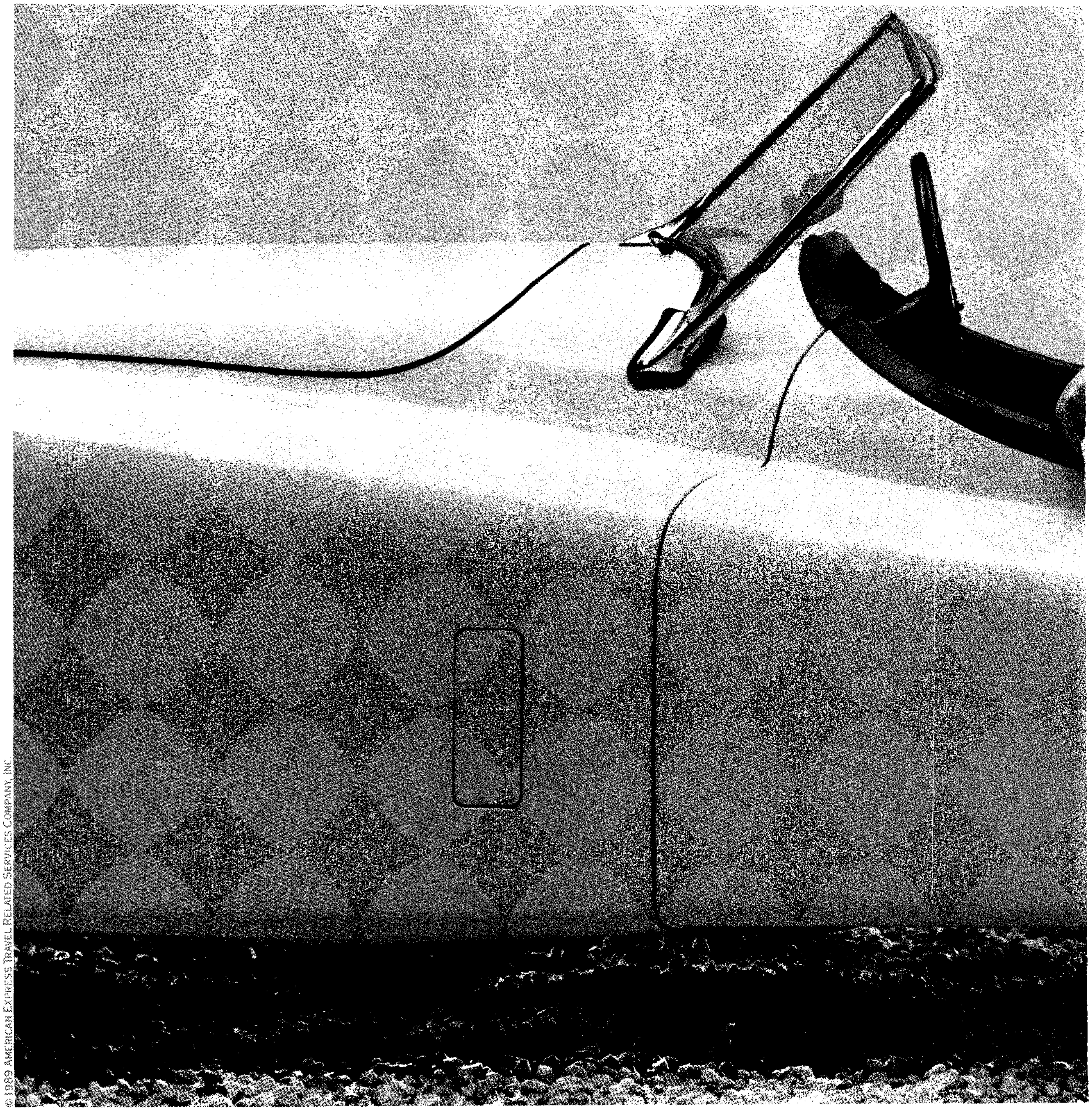

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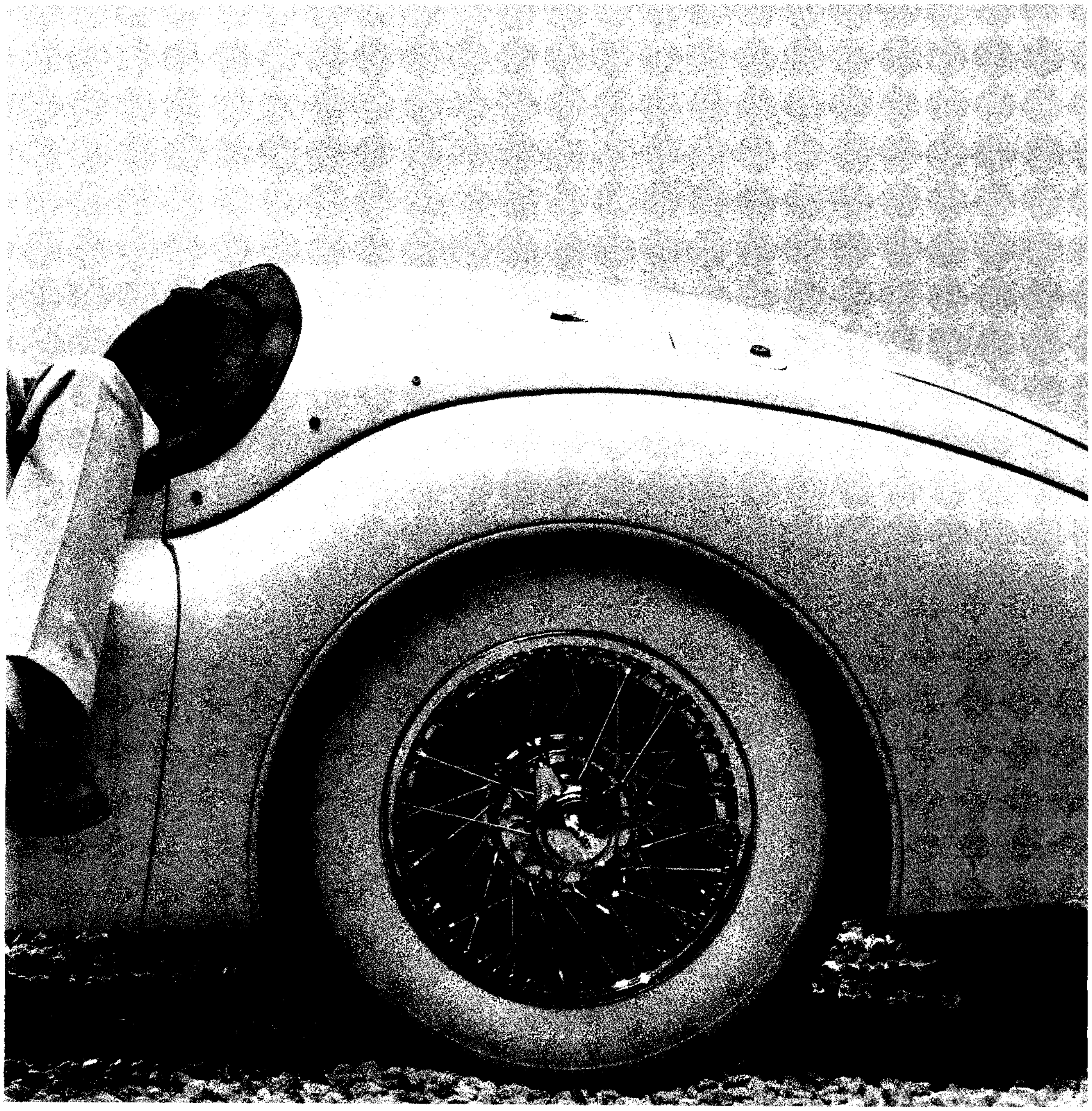

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ART—Cont'd

forties, almost as an afterthought to the Industrial Revolution, factory mass production displaced the artisan and his lathe in the creation of wood bowls. This show, of eighty works by twenty-one contemporary North American craftsmen (along with four bowls by four unknown Early American settlers), proves that the artisanal tradition has survived. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A show of objects from ancient Israel which includes a mosaic floor excavated near Haifa. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Words of Blood, Images of Fire," a tribute to the French Revolution, includes a sketch (attributed to David) of Robespierre on the day of his execution; and many letters, speeches, and memoranda. Through Aug. 20. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—The Berg Collection has mounted a presentation of mostly letters and manuscripts in which poets and novelists from Chaucer to Bellow ruminate on love and death. Several of the selections are from works too often cited ("Romeo and Juliet," "Death Be Not Proud"), while others (excerpts from Defoe's "Journal of the Plague Year," various notices written on mourning stationery) seem to lack insight into the themes. But a few fresh, urgent passages add depth and wit to the show: a series of love letters by Clifford Odets, in which he writes of rolling around in the grass and of the meaning of life; "Who's Most Afraid of Death?," a haunting poem by E. E. Cummings (inscribed to his wife) that achieves a near-perfect unity of love and death; and a group of three letters from an aggrieved Charles Dickens, all of which announce to his friends the passing of his beloved pet, Grip the raven: "My dear sir . . . Grip is no more." (Berg Collection Exhibition Room. Open daily, except Thursdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ Botanical illustrations from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, among them Georg Ehret's colored engraving "Yucca Aloifolia," a couple of Redouté watercolors and prints of his work from "Les Roses" and "Les Liliacées," and watercolors by Lilian Snelling, Mary Grierson, and Pandora Sellars. Through Sept. 2. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—This first retrospective of the well-regarded African-American painter Hughie Lee-Smith includes some moving and unique portraits of isolation made in the fifties that call to mind Marsh, Tooker, and the early Guston; and sixties works depicting isolated figures next to metal poles with colored ribbon flapping from them. In the seventies and eighties the subtle surrealist cast fades and a relatively ordinary urban realism remains. . . . ¶ Graphics and installations that incorporate photography, the work of fifteen contemporary artists. Both shows through Sept. 24. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Christopher Wilmarth (1943-87)—This exhibition is a coda to the MOMA retrospective, with an emphasis on drawings rather than sculptures. The early-seventies paper pieces with folds and staples are especially good—sensuous and succinct. The later, figurative works are sometimes powerful but suggest an acrid emotionalism. Through Aug. 20. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Center for African Art—"Wild Spirits Strong Medicine: African Art and the Wilderness." A provocative display of artifacts. It begins with pairs of objects which illustrate the contrasts between village life and wilderness, or bush, life. The village objects are refined and domesticated; the others are aggressive and exaggerated. Additional exhibits related to the wild include an extraordinary fifteen-foot snake mask. Through Aug. 13. (54 E. 68th St. Open daily except Mondays; opens Sundays at noon.)

Sculpture & Color, Part II—The sculpture "The Opera of Silence," by Mel Chin, includes a wood carving of a man who is bound and armless, and who laboriously props up a huge sunken tom-tom drum. The piece is an eloquent defense of the currently unfashionable but nonetheless very American tradition of wood carving, a medium that is favored by many of the young as well as the established artists in this show. Through Aug. 15. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

Richard Long at the Guggenheim

"Literacy on the Table"—An admirably integrated exhibition of primarily multi-media works that address cultural literacy in relation to "otherness." In "See Me Jump," Clarissa T. Sligh rewrites Dick and Jane from a black perspective, and Edgar Heap of Birds, in a series of drawings, emblazons his Native American identity with such words as TRIBE UPON BACK. Through Aug. 26. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

New Talent—New-talent shows, once the staple of art-gallery summer fare, are almost nonexistent this year. But there are two lively shows of work that displays youthful exuberance coupled with post-conceptual agnosticism. At American Fine Arts (40 Wooster St., through Aug. 5), paintings and sculptures—by forty-nine artists—are exhibited in a "Colab" salon style. They evidence a turn away from pictorial image-making, seem compatible with today's growing social activism, and range from deliberately dumb mechanical toys to stormy attacks on formalist convention. At Feature Gallery (484 Broome St., through Aug. 11), a show called "Romancing the Stone" includes perplexing abstractions by Christopher Sasser, and Michael Banicki's nonsensically rational gridded dot paintings, which map the artist's very personal rating system for artists.

Group Shows—At the **alexander,** 59 Wooster St.: A show of landscape paintings that includes a number of interesting works—Sylvia Plimack Mangold's depiction of a breezy, feathery mass of trees, for example, which has luscious paint scraped about its surface and is edged in the artist's signature faux masking tape; and Robin Winters' large enigmatic landscape that is stratified in the manner of the stepped Mayan-like pyramid atop it. Among others represented are Robert Bordo and Louisa Chase. Through Aug. 11. . . . **marlborough,** 40 W. 57th St.: A big sampler of mostly gallery artists, many represented by work with a summer theme. Of these, Larry Rivers' two portraits—of a jazz musician naked in his hot hotel room, and of a woman in shorts lolling languorously on a porch—make the best, sultriest point. Through Sept. 16. . . . **museum of contemporary hispanic art,** 584 Broadway: One of the exhibitions here is devoted to the work of contemporary Guatemalan artist Luis González Palma. It includes several heavily romanticized, pain-dripping religious collages, which are made of bits of barbed wire, bouquets of dried flowers, and worn-looking photographs of thorn-crowned Guatemalans that look as if they were taken by early colonial visitors. Through Aug. 5. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . **pace,** 32 E. 57th St.: "Sculpture by Painters," many of whom are gallery artists, including Condo, de Kooning, Dine, Dubuffet, Johns, Kelly, Lichtenstein, Miró, Morley, Newman, Picasso, Schnabel, Twombly, and Warhol. Condo, who is new to the medium, makes an auspicious début in this handsome exhibition. Through Sept. 1. . . . **galerie st. etienne,** 24 W. 57th St.: A show honoring Otto Kallir, the founder of the Galerie St. Etienne, as much for his pioneering exhibitions of the Austrian Expressionists as for his fascination with the documentation of this century's profound events. In addition to a gorgeous watercolor of a girl by Emil Nolde, an intense self-portrait by the little-known Richard Gerstl (whom Kallir discovered after the artist committed suicide at age twenty-five), and some fascinating paintings by the composer Arnold Schoenberg, we see Charles Lindbergh's application for an airplane license, Robert E. Peary's telegram confirming the "discovery" of the North Pole, and written recollections of Adolf Hitler, the artist, by Reinhold Hanisch. Hanisch sold Hitler's watercolors in the teens, and in the thirties was Kallir's restorer, prior to the dealer's flight from his native Austria. Through Sept. 8. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **weber,** 142 Greene St.: Members of what we are meant to see as two generations of conceptual artists are united in this summer gathering. The oldies take the cake: Sol LeWitt's white box structure from the seventies, Daniel Buren's "A Frame in a Frame in a Frame for a Frame"—a site-specific wall piece of asymmetrically arranged yellow beach-awning stripes against a slate-colored wall—and Hamish Fulton's framed photographs of wildernesses where he walked, are very elegant works, each quite coolly sublime in its way. Works in mixed media by Franz Erhard Walther, Wallace & Donohue, Massimo Antonaci, and Magdalena Jetelová—the younger guard—look pretty good, too, but a little gimmicky and unfocussed by comparison. Also, in the small gallery, there are beautiful prints by Robert Ryman, theologist of colors white. Through Aug. 25. . . . **york,** 21 E. 65th St.: The York's main gallery is given over to stiff and provincial American landscape and figurative paintings of the nineteenth century, but the entranceway is devoted to work from the early twentieth century that displays a more engaged idea of culture: an ink sketch of New York by Stuart Davis, a watercolor of a house in the snow by Charles Burchfield, a painting of a lively urban crowd by Guy Pène du Bois, a brooding still-life by Marsden Hartley, and an oil-and-sand composition of interlocking trapezoids by Charles Shaw. Through Sept. 1.

PHOTOGRAPHY

WE love the Sierra Club, we love photography, and we love New York City, but as a ménage à trois they can be dreadful. "The Nature of New York City," the summer photography exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History, displays an array of photo opportunities that should have been missed—and also a number of weeds that need to be pulled. All the pictures are by members of the photography committee of the New York City branch of the club, and, in keeping with the group's reason for being, each image is supposed to record the delightful presence of the natural world in Gotham. Yet this is the kind of event that could make people stop watering their plants. It has the opposite effect of what seems intended, as the ugly side of the picturesque keeps creeping into pictures that are meant to be touching. There's a closeup of a horse's head surrounded by contraptions that look like S & M gear; the bucket near the poor thing's mouth looks as if it's near empty, given the amount of grain spilled out onto the street. Pigeons are pecking at the grain, and you can't help thinking that the next meal will occur when the horse realizes that it ain't roast chicken but it's a bird, so why not?

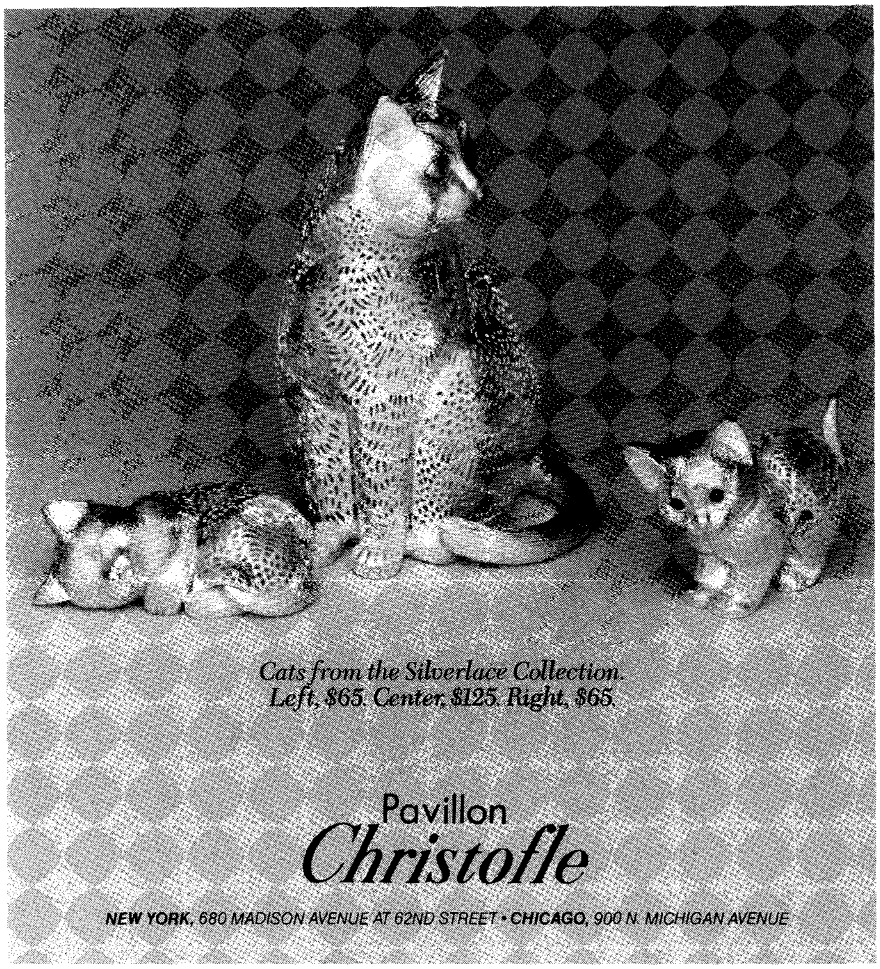
There's another photograph involving our feathered friends: this one's composition breaks down into three horizontal strips, within which seagulls fly and sit and do something else that rhymes. The top strip shows a sickly green patch of sea; the middle strip has water bumping against rocks covered in a substance of the same ghastly hue as the sea. The color match is highly artistic. But most painterly of all is the bottom, with its wall that looks like a detail from a Jackson Pollock. Pollock's drippings weren't droppings, though.

SIDNEY D. GAMBLE (1890-1968)—A small selection of photographs from the thousands that the artist shot in China between 1917 and 1932. Gamble, also a sociologist, spent many years in China trying to understand it, writing about it, and taking pictures. This exhibition shows an observer who was interested in capturing both tradition and change. Through Sept. 9. (China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.)

JOHN L. MURPHY / FRED W. McDARRAH—Murphy gets the ideas for his studio-made tableaux from studying goings on at Coney Island. / Prints of Greenwich Village in the fifties and sixties and portraits of some of the figures (Bob Dylan, Jack Kerouac, Franz Kline) who worked there then. Through Aug. 6. (Queens Museum, Flushing Meadow Park, Flushing. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 to 5; Thursdays, 10 to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5:30.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—Photographs and a video by six artists—Sophie Calle, Sarah Charlesworth, Donigan Cumming, Dieter Froese, Allan McCollum, and Angela Neuke—who concentrate on contemporary culture via work that explores the impact of the mass media, technology, and photojournalism. Through Sept. 3. (Tuesdays, noon to 8; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

SHORT LIST—THOMAS FREDERICK ARNDT, Photofind, 138 Spring St., opens at noon Tuesdays through Fridays (through Aug. 4); **ROBERT SHEEHAN,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (through Aug. 25); **AARON SISKIND,** Museum of Modern Art (through Oct. 10).



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MUSIC

LET it never be suggested that the New York Philharmonic treats its summer park concerts as blanks on a schedule to be filled in with whatever is convenient. The current series is to be led by two of the most talked-about conductors in the business today. Hugh Wolff has made such dramatic improvements in the New Jersey Symphony that he has even been spoken of as a possible dark-horse candidate to succeed Zubin Mehta in New York. Wolff conducts in Prospect Park on the first of August, in Snug Harbor the next day, and in Eisenhower Park, in Nassau County, on the sixth. Yuri Temirkanov, who leads the Soviet Union's best-regarded orchestra, the Leningrad Philharmonic, and who has made experienced conductor-watchers elsewhere nod their heads in recognition of the genuine article, follows in Central Park on the seventh, the Botanical Garden on the eighth, and Cunningham Park on the ninth.

Both seem to be most acknowledged for leading flashy orchestral showpieces (sad to say, that seems to be the fastest ticket to esteem for conductors nowadays), so in that regard at least the programs are well chosen: Wolff will conduct excerpts from the "Romeo and Juliet" music of both Berlioz and Prokofiev; Temirkanov will conduct the Mussorgsky-Ravel "Pictures at an Exhibition."

Meanwhile, Wolff's home orchestra will be offering more typical summer fare: a pops concert with Marvin Hamlisch singing and playing at the Garden State Arts Center, in Holmdel, New Jersey, on August 1. We are as inclined as the next person to turn up our nose at such celebrity appearances, but not in this case: we have seen Hamlisch in action, and he is extraordinary. He will take a line from an audience member—any member, any line—and improvise a song around it on the spot: words and music, rhymes in the right places, no hesitations. This is impressive.

IN TOWN

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—THE MERRY WIDOW, with Claudia Cummings, Jane Bunnell, Louis Otey, and Mark Thomsen; conducted by *Imre Pallo. (Aug. 1 at 8.)* . . . CARMEN, *with* Wendy White, Margaret Cusack, John Absalom, and Kenneth Shaw; Hal France. (Aug. 2 at 8.) . . . DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE, with Elizabeth Hynes, Elizabeth Carter, Walter MacNeil, *and Stephen Dickson; Scott Bergeson.* (Aug. 3 at 8.) . . . DON GIOVANNI, with Elizabeth Holleque, Frances Ginsberg, Erie Mills, and John Cheek; Sergiu Comissiona. (Aug. 4 at 8.) . . . THE MIKADO, with Lisa Saffer, Jane Shaulis, Richard McKee, and Paul Austin Kelly; Peter Howard. (Aug. 5 at 2.) . . . RIGOLETTO, with Joan Gibbons, Janis Eckhart, Mark Rucker, and Jon Garrison; Scott Bergeson. (Aug. 5 at 8.) . . . IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA, with Patricia Spence, Rebecca Russell, Ron Peo, and Michael Cousins; Sergiu Comissiona. (Aug. 8 at 8.) . . . ANNA BOLENA, with Marilyn Mims, Mimi Lerner, Paul Hartfield, and Harry Dworchak; Scott Bergeson. (Aug. 9 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL—July 31: The Takács String Quartet. With guest artists Richard Stoltzman, clarinet, and Vladimir Feltsman, piano. . . . ¶ Aug. 1-2: Edo de Waart conducting the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, with the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson trio and Håkan Hardenberger, trumpet. . . . ¶ Aug. 3: The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson trio in a program of works by Mozart, Haydn, Schumann, and Beethoven. . . . ¶ Aug. 4-5: Edo de Waart conducting the festival orchestra, with Mr. Stoltzman, clarinet; Lilian Kallir and Claude Frank, piano. . . . ¶ Aug. 8-9: Gerard Schwarz conducting the festival orchestra, with Shura Cherkassky, piano, and Paul Tortelier, cello. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Evenings at 8. Through Aug. 26.)

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—In its annual series of free outdoor concerts. Hugh Wolff conducting. CENTRAL PARK'S GREAT LAWN: July 31. . . . PROSPECT PARK, Brooklyn: Aug. 1. . . . SNUG HARBOR, Staten Island: Aug. 2. . . . ¶ Yuri Temirkanov conducting. CENTRAL PARK'S GREAT LAWN: Aug. 7. . . . NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN, the Bronx: Aug. 8. . . . CUNNINGHAM PARK, Queens: Aug. 9. (Evenings at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

CARAMOOR MUSIC FESTIVAL—Aug. 4 at 9: The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson trio in a program of works by Haydn, Shostakovich, and Brahms. . . . ¶ Aug. 5 at 8:30: The Empire Brass Quintet performing works by Handel, Bach, Copland, and others. . . . ¶ Aug. 6 at 5:30: The Duke Ellington orchestra, conducted by Mercer Ellington. (Katonah, N.Y. Through Aug. 20. Trains that leave Grand Central on Saturdays at 2:48 and 5:48, and on Sundays at 3:48, are met at Katonah by buses for Caramoor. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-5035.)

TANGLEWOOD—Aug. 1 at 8:30: The Boston Symphony Chamber Players performing contemporary works. With Lisa Saffer, soprano, and Gilbert Kalish, piano. . . . ¶ Aug. 2 at 8:30: Oliver Knussen conducting the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra in a program of works by Lukas Foss, John Watrous, Dmitri Smirnov, and others. . . . ¶ Aug. 3 at 8:30: Richard Pittman conducting Boston Musica Viva, with Yo-Yo Ma, cello. . . . ¶ Aug. 4 at 9: Jeffrey Tate conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra, with Maria João Pires, piano. . . . ¶ Aug. 5 at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra, with Peter Serkin, piano. . . . ¶ Aug. 6 at 2:30: Trevor Pinnock conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra, with Cho-Liang Lin, violin. . . . ¶ Aug. 9 at 8:30: Jorma Hynninen, baritone, and Ralf Gothoni, piano, performing Schubert's "Winterreise." (Lenox, Mass. Through Aug. 27. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

JAZZ / ROCK / POP PERSONAL APPEARANCES

JULIAN LENNON—Very enthusiastic (if not screaming) young girls in the audience and a singing voice that is an uncanny replication of his own might be two small jokes played by John Lennon on his son, except that the absence of the Fab Four from the memories of a new crop of fans will make this concert simply an evening of sensitive songs for romantic teens and young adults, and not even faintly subversive. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Aug. 2 at 8.)

INDIGO GIRLS—The twining voices and ringing folk-rock songs of Amy Ray and Emily Saliers have won impressive admirers—the duo have been the opening act at recent concerts by fellow-Georgians R.E.M., and by that avatar of folkie intensity, Neil Young. Joni Mitchell is clearly a strong influence, too, but the harmonies and empathic lyrics of this promising pair are long on warmth and short on narcissism. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Aug. 3 at 8.)

JOE JACKSON—This thirty-four-year-old graduate of the Royal Academy of Music has been, successively, the very model of a skinny-tie New Wave rocker, a big-band jazz leader, a film-score composer, and, most recently, a would-be Sondheim for disillusioned baby boomers; his new album, "Blaze of Glory," is "dedicated to my generation," and sounds like a thickly orchestrated original-cast recording of "Into the Woods of Early Middle Age." Generational spokesmen usually invite the admonition "Speak for yourself." Much of the time, thankfully, Joe Jackson has the good sense and unpretentious talent to do just that. (Beacon Theatre. Aug. 8-10 at 8.)

ANDERSON, BRUFORD, WAKEMAN, AND HOWE—Nassau Coliseum, Hempstead, Long Island. 1-516 587-9222. Aug. 4 at 8.

Sister Carol in the Park

"CLASSICAL JAZZ"—A six-concert series. Aug. 4: A tribute to Billie Holiday, with Abbey Lincoln, Jimmy Heath, Etta Jones, Houston Person, and Shirley Horn. . . . ¶ Aug. 5: The music of Bud Powell, with Slide Hampton, Mr. Heath, Barry Harris, Tommy Flanagan, and others. . . . ¶ Aug. 7: The music of Jelly Roll Morton, with Wynton Marsalis and others. . . . ¶ Aug. 8: A birthday celebration for Benny Carter, with Mr. Carter, Dizzy Gillespie, Hank Jones, Ray Brown, Ernestine Anderson, and others. . . . ¶ Aug. 9-10: A salute to Duke Ellington, with Mr. Marsalis and the Classical Jazz Orchestra. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. *Evenings at 8.*)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

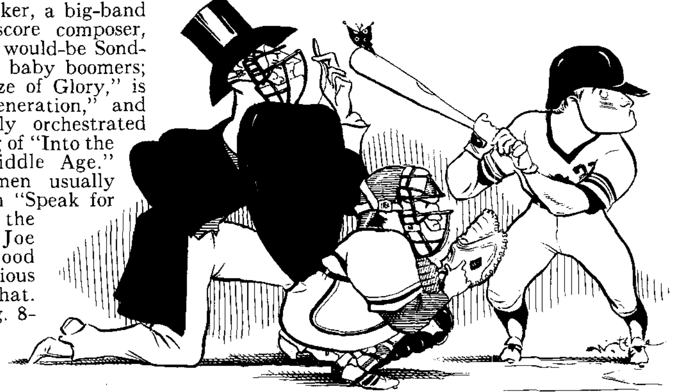
METS—Vs. the Montreal Expos, Aug. 4 at 7:35, Aug. 5 at 7:05, and Aug. 6 at 3:05. . . . ¶ Vs. the St. Louis Cardinals, starting Aug. 10.

YANKEES—Vs. the Minnesota Twins, Aug. 1 at 1, Aug. 2 at 4:30 (a twi-night doubleheader), and Aug. 3 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Cleveland Indians, Aug. 7-9 at 7:30.

(Home base for the Mets is Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; and for the Yankees, Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

HORSES—At Saratoga Springs: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1:30. The Test is on Aug. 3, and the Whitney Handicap is on Aug. 5. Through Aug. 28. . . . At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. . . . TROTTING at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. The Hambletonian is on Aug. 5 at noon. Through Aug. 19. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Mondays through Saturdays at 7:45.



ARTS FESTIVALS

SUMMERFARE—Final performances—"**WARD NO. SIX,**" an adaptation of the Chekhov story, performed by Moscow's Pushkin Theatre. In Russian, with simultaneous translation. (July 31-Aug. 1 at 8:30.) . . . **PETER SELLARS' OPERAS:** "Le Nozze di Figaro" (Aug. 2 at 8), "Don Giovanni" (Aug. 3 at 8), and "Così Fan Tutte" (Aug. 4 at 8). . . . **BEETHOVEN'S NINTH,** a weekend-long series of events that relate to that symphony. With Roger Norrington conducting the London Classical Players, and vocal and instrumental soloists. (Aug. 5 from 11:30 A.M. to 10 P.M., and Aug. 6 from 11:30 A.M. to 7:30 P.M.) (State University of New York at Purchase. For information about tickets and round-trip bus transportation from Lincoln Center, call 1-914 253-5900.)

LINCOLN CENTER OUT-OF-DOORS—A monthlong extravaganza that runs through Aug. 27. Aug. 1 at 8:15: Nikolais and Louis Dance. . . . ¶ Aug. 2 at noon: The Billy Taylor trio. . . . At 5:15: The Carlota Santana Spanish Dance Arts Company. . . . At 8:15: Nikolais and Louis Dance. . . . ¶ Aug. 3 at 6: Electric Phoenix. . . . At 8:15: Nikolais and Louis Dance. . . . ¶ Aug. 4 at 5:15: XXY Dance/Music. . . . ¶ Aug. 5 at 2:30: Remmy Ongala & Orchestre Super Matimila of Tanzania. . . . At 6:30: "Tales of Exile," a dance performance by Ruby Shang and Gilberte Tsaï. . . . ¶ Aug. 6 at 2: Caribbean music, with Isidro Bobadilla, Kimati Dinizulu, Orlando (Puntilla) Rios, and others. . . . At 8:15: Mongo Santamaria. . . . ¶ Aug. 8 at 5:15: Johanna Boyce & Calfwomen and Jennifer Monson & Dancers. . . . At 8:15: The Elisa Monte Dance Company. . . . ¶ Aug. 9 at 5:15: The Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre in "The Chinese Charade," a musical comedy. (Lincoln Center. No tickets necessary.)

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

LOVE BOAT—The Staten Island Ferry still costs a quarter, and the front deck, at sunset, is still a terrific place to hold hands, if you like that sort of thing. Children wearing foam-rubber Statue of Liberty crowns hold their mothers' hands, while their mothers hang on to the discarded foam-rubber torches. Tourists smile and hold hands for video cameras. A middle-aged woman in blue chiffon holds the paw of her puppy. The view of the Statue, with her illuminated accessories, promotes a flurry of hand-holding. It's only when you're back inside the fluorescent-lit terminal, with the deli, the newsstand, and the turnstiles, that you remember the more than a hundred thousand commuters who take the ferry every business day. If only the other modes of interborough transport (the subway? the bus?) inspired travellers to such displays of affection. Ferries—some with outdoor decks, some without—leave from the landing at South Ferry, which is accessible by the 1, 4, 5, N, or R trains. For more information, call 806-6940.

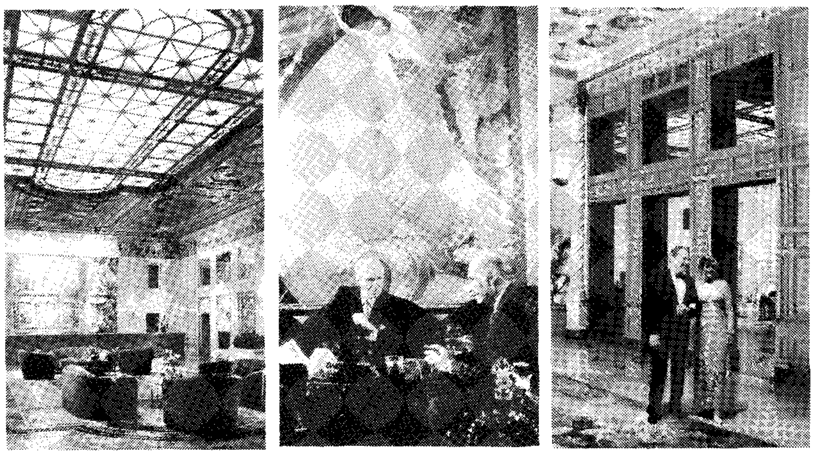
CENTRAL PARK BAND SHELL—The film director Jonathan Demme was the prince who discovered **SISTER CAROL,** reggae's self-styled Black Cinderella, in a downtown club, and then gave her memorable roles in "Something Wild" and "Married to the Mob." But she was already one of the most popular singers and improvisational rappers of the Kingston-Brooklyn musical axis, and this show will be a celebratory occasion for both Rastafarians and her newer, secular fans as well. (Aug. 6 at 3.) . . . ¶ Also this week, on Aug. 4: A. Leroy and Keith Terry. . . . ¶ Aug. 5: Tav Falco & Panther Burns, with the Hellcats and Cordell Jackson. (Mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 860-1335.)

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT—Aug. 2 and Aug. 9 at 6: The Goldman Band. . . . ¶ Aug. 5 at 8: Free Flight and the Amherst Saxophone Quartet. (Pier 16, East River at Fulton St.)

FLOATING CINEMA—Cartoons at the Riverside Park Promenade, near W. 96th St. (Aug. 2 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

JONES BEACH THEATRE—Aug. 3 at 8: Carole King. . . . ¶ Aug. 4 at 8: Mike & the Mechanics, with the Outfield. . . . ¶ Aug. 5 at 8: Johnny Mathis and Henry Mancini. (1-516 221-1000.)

PROSPECT PARK BAND SHELL—Aug. 5: Eddie Palmieri's Salsa Orchestra. . . . ¶ Aug. 6: Santiago Jimenez, Jr. (1-718 768-0699. Evenings at 8. No tickets necessary.)



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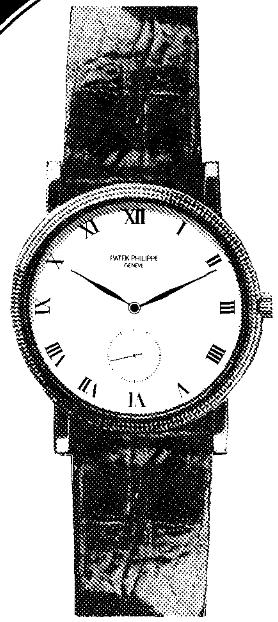

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THE MOVIE HOUSES

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6	7	8	9			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 24.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

Through Aug. 3: "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" (†). Closed Mondays.

From Aug. 4: Documentary and short films shown as part of Festival Latino in New York. In Spanish or Portuguese, some with English subtitles. (Closed Mondays.)

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).

Theatre 2: "Batman" (†).

Theatre 3: Through Aug. 3: "Shag" (directed by Zelda Barron), with Phoebe Cates. From Aug. 4: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

Through Aug. 8: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

From Aug. 9: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

"Batman" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).

Theatre 2: "UHF" (Jay Levey), with "Weird Al" Yankovic.

Theatre 3: "Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

Through Aug. 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†).

From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"Field of Dreams" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

"Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

Through Aug. 8: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†).

From Aug. 9: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

Through Aug. 1: "Weekend at Bernie's" (Ted Kotcheff), with Andrew McCarthy and Jonathan Silverman.

From Aug. 2: "Ghostbusters II" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Friday the 13th, Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan" (Rob Hedden).

Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Do the Right Thing" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 1: "The Karate Kid Part III" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita. From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†). From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).

Theatre 2: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.

Theatre 3: "Turner & Hooch."

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 3: "Shag" (Zelda Barron), with Phoebe Cates. From Aug. 4: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious.

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 3: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†). From Aug. 4: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone and Donald Sutherland.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "UHF" (Jay Levey).

Theatre 2: "Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Peter Pan" (1953), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

Through Aug. 1: "Shag" (Zelda Barron), with Phoebe Cates.

From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)

Theatre 1: "Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.

Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.

Theatre 2: "Batman" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)

Through Aug. 8: "The Magic Toyshop" (directed by David Wheatley), with Tom Bell, Caroline Milmoe, Kilian McKenna, Patricia Kerrigan, and Lorcan Granitch.

From Aug. 9: "Machine Dreams" (Peter Krieg; in English and German).

Bleecker Street Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 3: (Separate admissions) "Little Vera" (Vasily Pichul; in Russian), with Natalya Negoda; and "Vincent: The Life and Death of Vincent van Gogh" (†). Aug. 4-6: "Fox and His Friends" (1976, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German). Aug. 7-8: "Chinese Roulette" (1977, Fassbinder; in German), with Margit Carstensen; and "Why Does Herr R. Run Amok?" (1970, Fassbinder; in German), with Kurt Raab, Lilith Ungerer, and Hanna Schygulla. From Aug. 9: "The Stationmaster's Wife" (1977, Fassbinder; in German), with Raab.

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 3: "Field of Dreams" (†). From Aug. 4: "Chocolat" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Theatre 2: "Friday the 13th, Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan" (Rob Hedden).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

"Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†). From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†).

Theatre 2: "Peter Pan" (1953), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

Theatre 3: "The Navigator: An Odyssey Across Time" (Vincent Ward), with Bruce Lyons.

Theatre 4: "Dead Poets Society" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

Theatre 3: Through Aug. 8: "Lethal Weapon 2." From Aug. 9: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.

Theatre 4: Through Aug. 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†). From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Theatre 5: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Theatre 6: Through Aug. 3: "Do the Right Thing" (†). From Aug. 4: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 3: "Friday the 13th, Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan" (Rob Hedden). From Aug. 4: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone and Donald Sutherland.

Theatre 3: "Field of Dreams" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 49th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (†).

Theatre 3: Through Aug. 1: "Do the Right Thing" (†). From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Theatre 4: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Theatre 5: From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

Through Aug. 8: "The Karate Kid Part III" (John G. Avildsen), with Ralph Macchio and Noriyuki (Pat) Morita.

From Aug. 9: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"The Navigator: An Odyssey Across Time" (Vincent Ward), with Bruce Lyons.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

Through Aug. 3: (Matinées only) "Peter Pan" (1953), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon; and (evenings only) "Valentino Returns" (Peter Hoffman), with Fredric Forrest, Veronica Cartwright, Barry Tubb, and Jenny Wright.

From Aug. 4: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

Through Aug. 3: "Little Vera" (Vasily Pichul; in Russian), with Natalya Negoda.

From Aug. 4: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)

"Eat a Bowl of Tea" (Wayne Wang).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Field of Dreams" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "Four Adventures of Reinette and Mirabelle" (Eric Rohmer; in French), with Jöelle Miquel and Jessica Forde.

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 3: "Chocolat" (†). From Aug. 4: "A Taxing Woman Returns" (Juzo Itami; in Japanese), with Nobuko Miyamoto.

Theatre 3: "The Music Teacher" (Gérard Corbiau; in French).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 3: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†). From Aug. 4: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 3: "A Taxing Woman's Return" (Juzo Itami; in Japanese), with Nobuko Miyamoto. From Aug. 4: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

"When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 3: "Friday the 13th, Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan" (Rob Hedden). From Aug. 4: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone and Donald Sutherland.

Theatre 3: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†).

Theatre 4: "Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.

Theatre 5: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

Theatre 6: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 1: "Shag" (Zelda Barron), with Phoebe Cates. From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 8: "Ghostbusters II" (†). From Aug. 9: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.

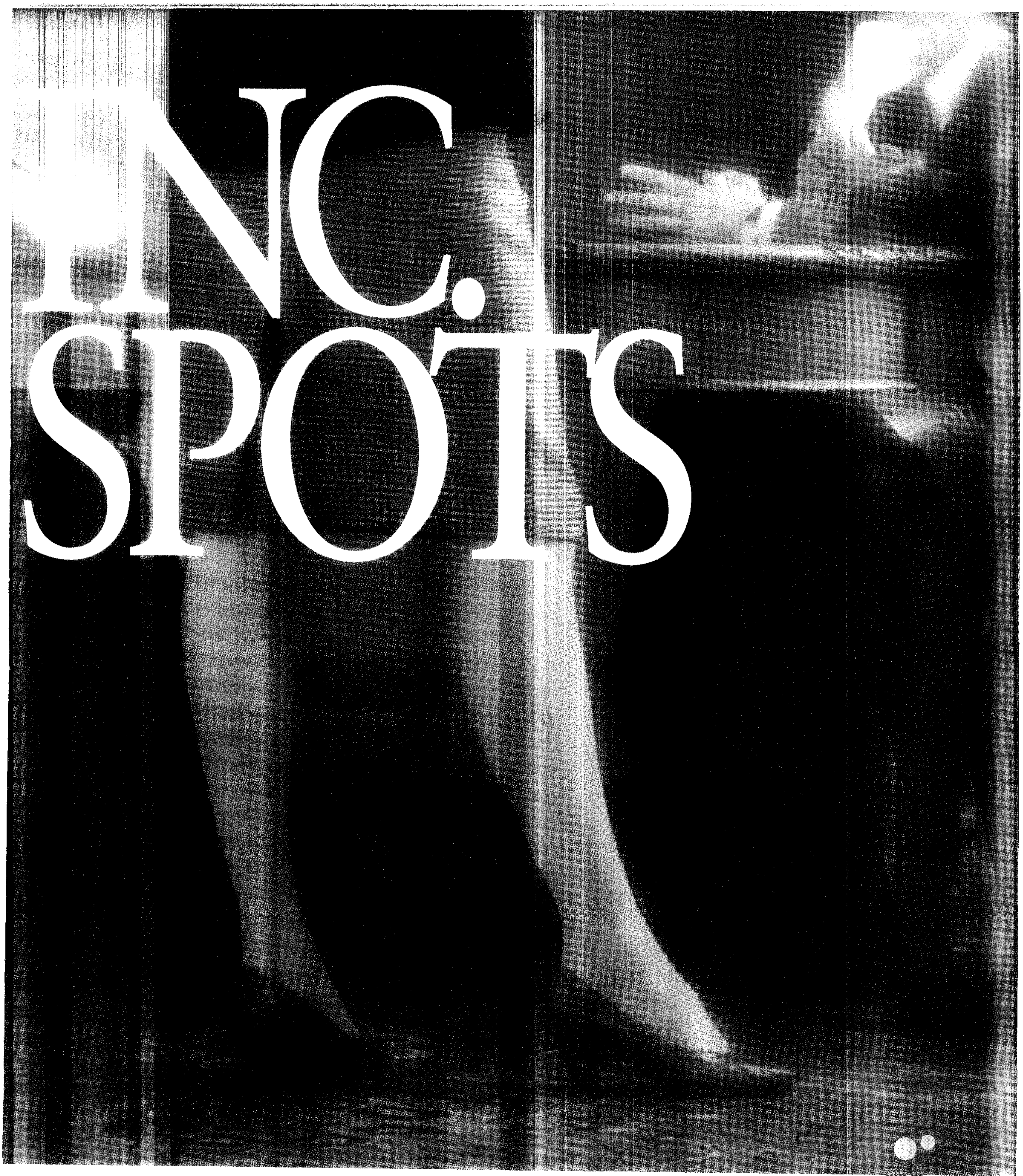
Theatre 2: "Field of Dreams" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Aug. 3: "Shag" (directed



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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

by Zelda Barron), with Phoebe Cates. From Aug. 4: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious.

Theatre 3: "Weekend at Bernie's" (Ted Kotcheff), with Andrew McCarthy and Jonathan Silverman.

Theatre 4: "Friday the 13th, Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan" (Rob Hedden).

Theatre 5: "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (William Shatner), with Shatner and Leonard Nimoy.

Theatre 6: Through Aug. 3: "UHF" (Jay Levey), with "Weird Al" Yankovic. From Aug. 4: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone and Donald Sutherland.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).

Theatre 3: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†).

Theatre 4: "Peter Pan" *(1953), a full-length* Walt Disney cartoon.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through Aug. 1: "Ghostbusters II" (†). From Aug. 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (†).

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)

"Lawrence of Arabia" (†).

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 2" (Richard Donner), with Mel Gibson and Danny Glover.

Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 2."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

July 31: "Operation Petticoat" (1959, directed by Blake Edwards), with Cary Grant, Tony Curtis, and Dina Merrill; and "I Was a Male War Bride" (1949, Howard Hawks), with Grant and Ann Sheridan.

Aug. 1-2: "Peter Ibbetson" (1935, Henry Hathaway), with Ann Harding and Gary Cooper; and "City Streets" (1931, Rouben Mamoulian), with Cooper, Sylvia Sidney, and Guy Kibbee.

Aug 3-5: "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" (†) and "Bringing Up Baby" (†).

From Aug. 6: Feature films shown as part of Festival Latino in New York. In Spanish or Portuguese, with English subtitles.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Aug. 1: Two programs of cartoons shown each week.

Aug. 2-3: "Zabriskie Point" (1970, Michelangelo Antonioni), with Mark Frechette, *Daria Halprin, and Rod Taylor*; and "Far North" (1988, Sam Shepard), with Jessica Lange, Charles Durning, Tess Harper, and Ann Wedgeworth.

Aug. 4-5: "Blade Runner" (†); and "A Clockwork Orange" (1971, Stanley Kubrick), *with Malcolm McDowell*, Patrick Magee, and Adrienne Corri.

Aug. 6: "Little Dorrit" (1988, Christine Edzard), with Derek Jacobi and Alec Guinness.

Aug. 7-8: Two programs of cartoons shown each day.

From Aug. 9: "The Arabian Nights" (1973, Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian); and "The Decameron" (1971, Pasolini; in Italian), with Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli, and Pasolini.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)

July 31: "The Woman in the Moon" (1929, Fritz Lang; silent), with Fritz Rasp; and "Aelita: The Revolt of the Robots" (1924, Jakov Protazanov; silent).

Aug. 1-2: "The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T." (1953, Roy Rowland), with Peter Lind Hayes, Mary Healy, Hans Conried, and Tommy Rettig; and "The 7th Voyage of Sinbad" (1958, Nathan Juran), with Kerwin Mathews and Kathryn Grant.

Aug. 3: "Half-Human" (1955, Inoshiro Honda), with John Carradine; and "The Hideous Sun Demon" (1959, Robert Clarke), with Clarke.

Aug. 4-7: "The Tingler" (1960, William Castle), with Vincent Price; and "House of Wax" (1953, André de Toth; in 3-D), with Phyllis Kirk, Vincent Price, Carolyn Jones, and Paul Picerni.

From Aug. 8: "The Tingler"; and "The Fly" (1958 †).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

July 31: "Secrets of the Night" (1925, Herbert Blanché; silent), with ZaSu Pitts, Madge Bellamy, and James Kirkwood; and "Old Heidelberg" (1915, John Emerson; silent), with Dorothy Gish, Wallace Ford, and Erich von Stroheim.

At MOMA, "Hollywood in 1939": Irene Dunne and Charles Boyer in "Love Affair"

Aug. 1: "Empire of the Sun" (1987, Steven Spielberg), with John Malkovich, Miranda Richardson, and Christian Bale; and "The Last Emperor" (1987, Bernardo Bertolucci), with John Lone.

Aug. 2: "Bank Holiday" (1938, Carol Reed), with Margaret Lockwood and Hugh Williams; and "The Stars Look Down" (1939, Reed), with Lockwood and Michael Redgrave.

Aug. 3: "The Whistler" (1944, William Castle), with Richard Dix and Gloria Stuart; "The Serpent of the Nile" (1953, Castle), with Rhonda Fleming, William Lundigan, and Raymond Burr; and "The Spirit Is Willing" (1967, Castle), with Sid Caesar, Vera Miles, and Mary Wickes.

Aug. 4-5: "Working Girl" (1988, Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Sigourney Weaver, and Melanie Griffith; and "Something Wild" (†).

Aug. 6: "Tales of Poor Lovers" (1954, Carlo Lizzani; in Italian), with Anna Maria Ferrero and Marcello Mastroianni; and "Beach of Rome" (1970, Pier Paolo Pasolini; in *Italian), with Franco Citti.*

Aug. 7: "Anna Christie" (1923, John Griffith Wray; silent), with Blanche Sweet; and "The Grand Duchess and the Waiter" (1926, Mal St. Clair; silent), with Florence Vidor and Adolphe Menjou.

Aug. 8: "Passport to Pimlico" (†); and "Hue and Cry" (1947, Charles Crichton), with Alastair Sim, Jack Warner, and Valerie White.

Aug. 9: "The Hidden Room" (1950, Edward Dmytryk), with Robert Newton and Sally Grey; and "Guest in the House" (1945, John Brahm), with Anne Baxter and Ralph Bellamy.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

July 31: "Nibelungen Saga" (1924, Fritz Lang; silent).

Aug. 1: "Blackmail" (1929, Alfred Hitchcock), with Anny Ondra, Cyril Ritchard, and Sara Allgood; and "Sabotage" ("The Woman Alone"; 1936, Hitchcock), with Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, and Desmond Tester.

Aug. 2: "Goldfinger" (1964, Guy Hamiliton) and "From Russia with Love" (1964, Terrence Young), both with Sean Connery.

Aug. 3: "Hands Across the Table" (†); and "Take a Letter, Darling" (1942, Mitchell Leisen), with Rosalind Russell, Fred MacMurray, Constance Moore, and Robert Benchley.

Aug. 4-5: "Trouble in Paradise" (†); and "Design for Living" (1933, Ernst Lubitsch), with Fredric March, Miriam Hopkins, and Gary Cooper.

Aug. 6: "The Little Foxes" (1941, William Wyler), with Bette Davis, Herbert Marshall, and Teresa Wright; and "Dodsworth" (†).

Aug. 7: "The Tenant" (1976, Roman Polanski), with Polanski, Isabelle Adjani, Melvyn Douglas, Jo Van Fleet, and Shelley Winters; and "Knife in the Water" (1962, Polanski; in Polish), with Zygmunt Malanoquicz, Leon Niemczyk, and Jolanta Umecka.

Aug. 8: "Arsène Lupin" (†); and "The Man Who Wouldn't Die" (1942, Herbert I. Leeds), with Marjorie Weaver and Lloyd Nolan.

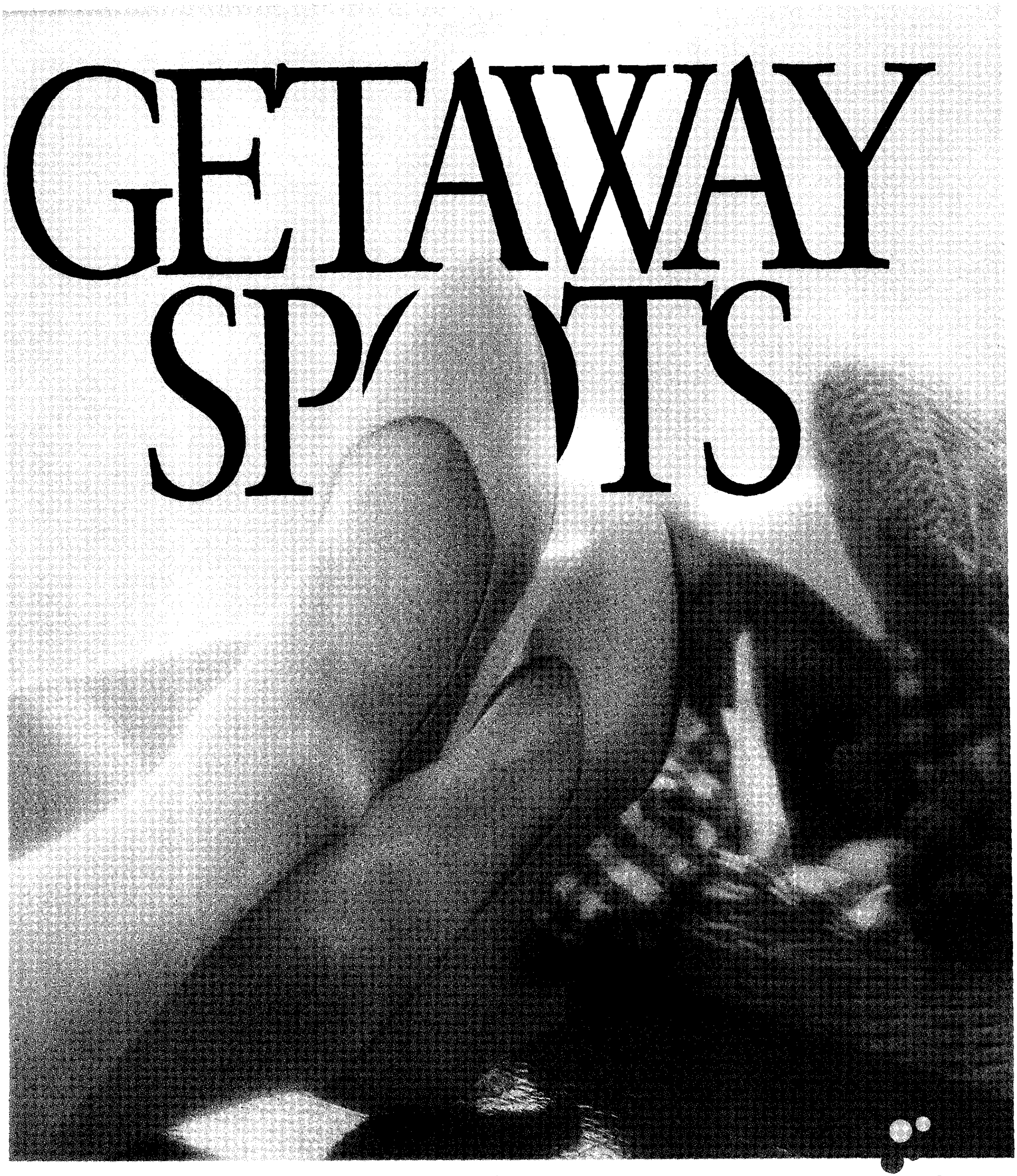
Aug. 9: "Mean Streets" (1973, Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, and Amy Robinson; and "Bang the Drum Slowly" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—July 31 at 2:30: "Before the Dawn" (1982, directed by Jayatilaka Armanath; in Sri Lankan)....¶ July 31 at 6: Films made in 1906 by *Georges Méliès, Emile Cohl,* D. W. Griffith, Romaine Fielding, and Kenean Buel. ...¶ Aug. 1 at 2:30: "On the Line" (1985, Steve Kovaks)....¶ Aug. 1 at 6 and Aug. 3 at 2:30: "Faust" (1926, F. W. Murnau; silent, with German intertitles), with Emil Jannings.... ¶ Aug. 3 at 6: "The Dead" (1987, John Huston), with Anjelica Huston and Donal McCann....¶ A program entitled "Hollywood in 1939." Aug. 4 at 2:30: "Intermezzo" (Gregory Ratoff), with Leslie Howard, Ingrid Bergman, and Edna Best.... Aug. 4 at 6: "Stagecoach" (John Ford), with John Wayne, Claire Trevor, and Thomas Mitchell.... Aug. 5 at 2: "The Roaring Twenties" (Raoul Walsh), with James Cagney, Priscilla Lane, and Humphrey Bogart.... Aug. 5 at 5: "Love Affair" (Leo McCarey), with Irene Dunne, Charles Boyer, and Maria Ouspenskaya.... Aug. 6 at 2: "Stagecoach."... Aug. 6 at 5: "Intermezzo."... Aug. 7 at 2:30: "The Roaring Twenties."... Aug. 7 at 6: "Love Affair."... Aug. 8 at 2:30: "Maisie" (Edwin L. Marin), with Ann Sothern, Robert Young, and Ruth Hussey.... Aug. 8 at 6: "Calling Dr. Kildare" (Harold S. Bucquet), with Lew Ayres, Lionel Barrymore, and Lana Turner.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 36th St. at 35th Ave., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—Films directed by Cecil B. De Mille. Aug. 2 *at 2:30: "Union Pacific" (1939), with Barbara* Stanwyck, Joel McCrea, and Robert Preston....¶ Aug. 3 at 2:30: "Northwest Mounted Police" (1940), with Gary Cooper....¶ Aug. 4 at 2:30: "Reap the Wild Wind" (1942), with John Wayne, Ray Milland, and Paulette Goddard....¶ Aug. 5 at 2: "Unconquered" (1947), with Cooper and Goddard....¶ Aug. 5 at 5: "Samson and Delilah" (1949), with Victor Mature and Hedy Lamarr....¶ Aug. 6 at 2: "The Greatest Show on Earth" (1949), with Charlton Heston, Betty Hutton, James Stewart, and Gloria Grahame....¶ Aug. 6 at 5: "The Ten Commandments" (1956), with Charlton Heston and Yul Brynner....¶ Aug. 9 at 2:30: "Unconquered."

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"MB Playhouse," a chance to see the television dramas you may have missed in the past thirty years. Aug. 1-5: Paddy Chayefsky's "Marty" (1953, NBC), with Rod Steiger and Nancy Marchand.... From Aug. 8: Thomas Wolfe's "Look Homeward, Angel" (1972, CBS), with Geraldine Page, E. G. Marshall, Barnard Hughes, and Kathryn Walker. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6 and



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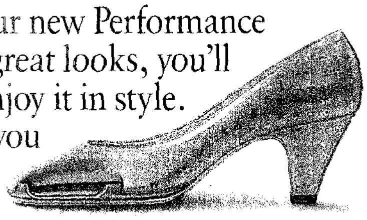

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Wednesdays through Saturdays at 3. . . . ¶ Comedies seen on cable. Aug. 1-5: "Not Necessarily the News" (1982) and "Not Necessarily Television" (1986). . . . From Aug. 8: "SCTV" (1984), with Joe Flaherty, Eugene Levy, Martin Short, Andrea Martin, and John Candy. Showings Tuesdays at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:15. . . . ¶ From Aug. 1: "Cinderella" (1957, Ralph Nelson; CBS), with Julie Andrews, Howard Lindsay, Dorothy Stickney, Ilka Chase, Edie Adams, Alice Ghostley, and Kaye Ballard. Music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. Showings Tuesdays at 2:30 and 6:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30. . . . ¶ Shows produced and directed by Gary Smith and Dwight Hemion. Aug. 1-5: "Peter Pan" (1976, NBC), with Mia Farrow, Danny Kaye, Virginia McKenna, and Paula Kelly. . . . From Aug. 8: "Steve and Eydie Celebrate Irving Berlin" (1978, NBC), with Carol Burnett, Sammy Davis, Jr., and Oscar Peterson; and "The Kopycats" (1972, ABC). Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays at 1.

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—Aug. 3 at 8: "The Three Musketeers" (1921, Fred Niblo; silent), with Douglas Fairbanks. Organ accompaniment written and played by Lee Erwin.

Uris Center Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. (879-5500)—Aug. 1 at 6:30: "The Beehive" (1982, Mario Camús; in Spanish), with José Sacristán. . . . ¶ Aug. 5 at 2: "The South" (1986, Victor Erice; in Spanish), with Omero Antonutti. . . . ¶ Aug. 8 at 6:30: "Lights and Shadows" (1988, Jaime Camino; in Spanish and Catalán), with José Luis Gómez.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, eighth floor, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—Aug. 7 at 1:50 and 6: "Cry Freedom" (1987, Richard Attenborough), with Denzel Washington, Kevin Kline, and Penelope Wilton. . . . ¶ Aug. 7 at 4:30 and 8:40: "Place of Weeping" (1988, Darrel Roodt). . . . ¶ Aug. 8 at 1, 4:25, and 7:50: "The River Niger" (1972, Irving Leming), with James Earl Jones, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Cicely Tyson. . . . ¶ Aug. 8 at 2:45 and 6:10: "Sitting in Limbo" (John Smith), with Pat Dillon, Fabian Gibbs, Sylvie Clarke, and Debbie Grant. . . . ¶ Aug. 9 at 2, 4:30, and 7: "Porgy and Bess" (1959, Otto Preminger), with Sidney Poitier, Dorothy Dandridge, Sammy Davis, Jr., Pearl Bailey, and Brock Peters.

IN BRIEF

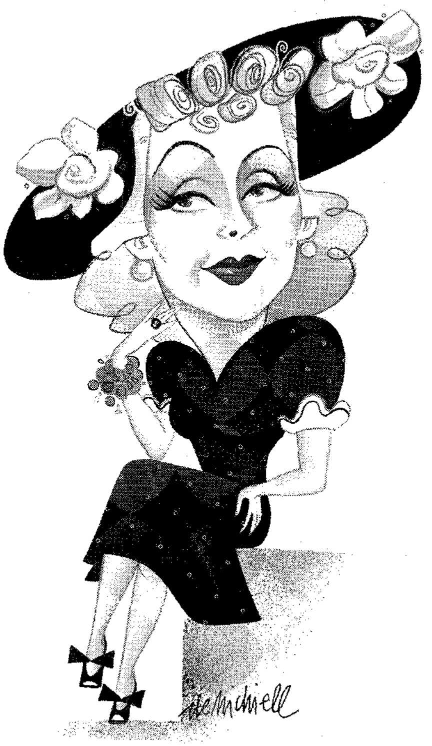
SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

Arsène Lupin (1932)—John Barrymore as a suave gentleman thief who poses as a duke in Paris in order to fleece the rich; his techniques are suspiciously easy—at one point, he saunters out of the Louvre with the Mona Lisa tucked under his arm, wrapped around an umbrella. Lionel Barrymore plays an agonized, limping detective on the lighthearted thief's trail. The contrast should be more entertaining than it is. This was the Barrymore brothers' first film together and John gets to show a little of his humor but Lionel was already making a profession out of crankiness. The movie is mildly amusing in spots, but it isn't much fun. Directed by Jack Conway, for M-G-M. From the play by Maurice Le Blanc and Francis de Croisset (which had already done service in the silent period), adapted by Carey Wilson, with dialogue by Bayard Veiller and Lenore Coffee. With Karen Morley, John Miljan, and Tully Marshall. —P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 8.)

Bang the Drum Slowly (1973)—Pathos poured on by the bucketful. This picture has a moral —Be kind. The baseball-player hero (blue-eyed Michael Moriarty, in the role Paul Newman played on TV in 1956) behaves like a saint to his doltish buddy (Robert De Niro), who is dying of Hodgkin's disease, and then is made to suffer remorse anyway. It seems he had neglected to send the buddy the scorecard of his last game on earth. And the ball team who had done their slobby best to behave like comrades to the dying man fail, unaccountably, to send a delegation to the funeral. This baseball weeper was very clumsily directed by John Hancock; everything stops dead for the dialogue scenes. De Niro gives what may be his only bad screen performance; he overworks the tobacco chewing and the idiotic smile. With Vincent Gardenia, Phil Foster, Ann Wedgeworth, Heather MacRae, Tom Ligon, Selma Diamond, Patrick McVey, and Marshall Efron. Adapted by Mark Harris, from his own novel.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 9.)

Batman—Tim Burton's powerfully glamorous comic-book epic, with sets angled and lighted like *film noir*, goes beyond pulp. It has a funky, nihilistic charge, and an eerie, poetic intensity. Michael Keaton is the fabulously wealthy Bruce Wayne, who patrols the sinister nighttime canyons of Gotham City in the guise of Batman, and Jack Nicholson is the sniggering mobster Jack Napier, who turns into the leering madman the Joker. The two are fighting for the soul of the city that spawned them. The movie is underwritten, but it has so many unpredictable spins that what's missing doesn't seem to matter much. It's mean and anarchic and blissful. Written by Sam Hamm, Warren Skaaren (and uncredited others), based on characters created by Bob Kane. With cinematography by Roger Pratt; design by Anton Furst; costumes by Bob Ringwood; a plangent score by Danny Elfman; and songs by Prince. The cast includes Jack Palance, Kim Basinger, Jerry Hall, and Robert Wuhl.—P.K. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/10/89.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)



At MOMA, "Hollywood in 1939": Ann Sothern in "Maisie"

Blade Runner (1982)—Ridley Scott's futuristic thriller is set in a hellish, claustrophobic city, dark and polluted, and with a continual drenching rainfall—it's Los Angeles in the year 2019. The congested-megalopolis sets are extraordinary: this is the grimy, retrograde future—the future as a black market, made up of scrambled, sordid aspects of the present. A visionary sci-fi movie that has its own look can't be ignored: it has its place in film history. But you're always aware of the sets as sets—it's 2019 back lot. And the movie forces passivity on you. It puts you in this lopsided maze of a city, with its post-human feeling, and keeps you persuaded that something bad is about to happen. Harrison Ford is the blade runner—a police officer who kills "replicants," the powerful humanoids manufactured by genetic engineers, if they rebel against their drudgery in the space colonies and show up on Earth. He tracks down four of these replicants (Brion James; Joanna Cassidy; Daryl Hannah, who has killer thighs and does a punk variation on Olympia, the doll automaton of "The Tales of Hoffmann"; and the blue-eyed scenery-chewer Rutger Hauer), but Ford's mission seems of no particular consequence. The whole movie gives you the feeling of not getting anywhere—of being part of the atmosphere of decay. With Sean Young as Rachael and William Sanderson as the toymaker. From the 1968 novel "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?," by Philip K. Dick; adapted by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples.—P.K. (Cinema Village; Aug. 4-5.)

Bringing Up Baby (1938)—Lunatic comedies of the thirties generally started with an heiress. This one starts with an heiress (Katharine Hepburn) who has a dog, George, and a leopard, Baby. Cary Grant is a paleontologist who has just acquired the bone he needs to complete his dinosaur skeleton. George steals the bone, Grant and Baby chase each other around, the dinosaur collapses—but Grant winds up with Hepburn, and no paleontologist ever got hold of a more beautiful set of bones. The director, Howard Hawks, keeps all this trifling nonsense in such artful balance that it never impinges on the real world; it may be the American movies' closest equivalent to Restoration comedy. With Charles Ruggles as an explorer, Barry Fitzgerald as a drunk, May Robson as a dowager, Walter Catlett as a sheriff, and Fritz Feld as a frenzied psychoanalyst. George is played by Asta, of the "Thin Man" series. The screenplay is by Dudley Nichols and Hagar Wilde, from Wilde's story. (This picture was the taking-off point for Peter Bogdanovich's comedy "What's Up, Doc?.")—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Aug. 3-5.)

Chocolat—Whatever Claire Denis's first feature is supposed to be about, it proves, at least, that the English don't have a monopoly on swanky colonial torpor. The movie is constructed as an extended flashback: a young Frenchwoman (named France) travelling in Africa remembers her fifties girlhood in a remote outpost of Cameroon, where her father was a district officer. Most of this story consists of smoldering looks exchanged by the girl's beautiful mother (Giulia Boschi) and the family's handsome African "boy," Protée (Isaach de Bankolé). When Maman feels herself becoming too hot and bothered at the sight of the noble black man, she brusquely orders him to fetch something; Protée deals with his frustration by taking a lot of showers. Nothing actually happens. In denying him any kind of release for his pent-up desire, Denis encourages us to think she's making a political point. What she's really doing is dehumanizing him—treating him as a gleaming hunk whose anger and wounded reserve just make him more exotically alluring. "Chocolat" looks pretty good, but it's merde in a fancy wrapper. In French.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza; through Aug. 3. . . . ¶ Bleecker Street Cinema; starting Aug. 4.)

Dead Poets Society—Robin Williams gives an astonishingly empathic performance as an eager, dedicated prep-school teacher in the late fifties. This teacher talks to his boys about the passions expressed in poetry and helps them release their creative impulses. But one of the boys, soaring on his new confidence, lacks the shrewdness and courage to deal with his rigid, uncomprehending father, and makes a disastrous choice. Directed by Peter Weir, from a script by Thomas Schulman, the picture draws out the obvious and turns itself into a classic. Weir, it appears, is more interested in the elegiac than in the dramatic. Like his "Gallipoli," this film has a gold ribbon attached to it. With Robert Sean Leonard, Ethan Hawke, Josh Charles, and Gale Hansen.—P.K. (6/26/89) (68th St. Playhouse, Quad Cinema, Guild, and Loews Paramount.)

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Dodsworth (1936)—While other writers were turning out novels ridiculing American materialism and glorifying the expatriate existence, Sinclair Lewis conceived a businessman-hero and showed him to be a true dreamer, while his culture-mad wife, longing to be enriched by life in Europe, was a foolish horror. Sidney Howard made a play of Lewis's novel, and Walter Huston gave a legendary performance as the hero. He also stars in the movie version, which was produced by Sam Goldwyn with great care and taste; William Wyler is the director. There's only one trouble, really, but it's central: Sidney Howard also did the screenplay, and the movie follows the stage version too closely. It looks programmed and underpopulated, though in an elegantly stylized way. (Rudolph Maté was the cinematographer.) Ruth Chatterton plays the wife; Mary Astor is the woman who appreciates Dodsworth's real value; and the cast includes Maria Ouspenskaya (she's Viennese this time), Paul Lukas, David Niven, Odette Myrtil, Spring Byington, and John Payne.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 6.)

Roman Polanski's "Knife in the Water" (1961), made when he was twenty-eight, is the work of a wunderkind who grew up fast: it has the low-key wryness and technical assurance you expect from directors twice as old. Playing at Theatre 80 St. Marks on August 7, this prickly, sinister three-character movie—set mostly during a daylong sailboat journey on the lakes of Mazury, in Poland—is an unpredictable fusion of psychological drama and unromantic comedy.

When a well-off husband and wife (Leon Niemczyk, Jolanta Umecka) take on a student hitchhiker (Zygmunt Malanowicz) as a deckhand, sexual tension and masculine rivalry add fire to built-in class jealousies. Using all his worldliness and expertise, Niemczyk, a successful sports reporter, bullies both the buxom young Umecka and the woefully unseaworthy Malanowicz.

But "Knife in the Water" never becomes a triangle or crime-of-passion movie, even when the husband's two victims have sex. The film is about people trying to transcend a gnawing recognition of their limitations. Shortly before they couple, the wife tells the student, "You're just the same. Only younger by half, weaker, and twice as stupid." Polanski maintains a cool tone that still seems contemporary; no one leaves the water unscathed. From the near-collision of Niemczyk's sports car with Malanowicz on the way to the boat to the climactic feigned death sequence, the movie recalls Elvis Costello's lyrics "Accidents will happen/ We only hit-and-run/ He used to be your victim/ Now you're not the only one."

Do the Right Thing—The third feature by Spike Lee takes place in the black neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, on a punishingly hot day; the focus of the action is a pizzeria, Sal's Famous, which is apparently the last white-owned business on the block; and the climax is a riot sparked by a monstrous act of police brutality. At its most basic, Lee's intention is to demonstrate how in a racially polarized society the slow accumulation of small irritations can swell to something huge and ugly and lethal. It's a solid idea for a movie, and initially the picture provides its share of incidental pleasures. It has loads of atmosphere, and superb cinematography by Ernest Dickerson, who gives the images a daring, Hawaiian-shirt glare. And, although most of the many characters Lee shows us are types, at least there are a lot of different ones, and their encounters are often funny. But Lee goes wrong by pushing his material to a "powerful" climax, a Scorsese-like explosion of violence: he sacrifices political clarity for the sake of the big statement. He's nimble-witted and passionate, but his movie seems to shout at us rather than speak to us. In addition to writing, producing, and directing, Lee also plays the pivotal role of Mookie, the pizza deliveryman. Others in the cast are Danny Aiello (as Sal), Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Giancarlo Esposito, Bill Nunn, Rosie Perez, Joie Lee, John Turturro, and Richard Edson; as a trio of middle-aged street-corner philosophers, Paul Benjamin, Frankie Faison, and Robin Harris are responsible for the movie's best, loosest scenes.—T.R. (7/24/89) (Manhattan Twin, 59th Street East Cinema, Art Greenwich Twin, Worldwide Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and National Twin. . . . ¶ Chelsea Cinemas; through Aug. 3.)

Field of Dreams—Doggerel emotion. Kevin Costner, a New Age farmer in Iowa, longs to be reconciled with his dead father, a minor-league baseball player whose outlook he had rejected in the sixties. He hears a whispered command to build a baseball field, and when he does the spirits of Shoeless Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta) and the other White Sox who were barred from baseball for life after the 1919 World Series scandal arrive and play regularly. This is only the beginning of the hero's mystical encounters. That the film is sincere doesn't mean it's not manipulative; when the weepers in the audience start up, you may feel like a pariah if you're not moved. Adapted by the writer-director Phil Alden Robinson from W. P. Kinsella's 1982 novel "Shoeless Joe." With Amy Madigan, James Earl Jones, Burt Lancaster, Dwier Brown as the father, and Gaby Hoffman.—P.K. (5/1/89) (Eastside Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, Cinema 3, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; through Aug. 3.)

The Fly (1958)—James Clavell—not yet a popular novelist—wrote the script for this tacky low-budget picture about a scientist whose carelessness gets him into a tragic pickle. It became a considerable box-office success. Maybe the idea of a man's head being reduced in size so that it fit onto the body of a fly was just so silly that it was rather tantalizing. Or maybe audiences couldn't resist the final sequence: caught in a spider's web, with the spider bearing down on him, the man-fly squeaks "Help me!" in the tiniest of voices. With Vincent Price, Herbert Marshall, Patricia Owens, Kathleen Freeman, and Al (later David) Hedison as the unlucky fellow. The draggy direction is by Kurt Neumann; based on a short story by George Langelaan.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting Aug. 8.)

Ghostbusters II—Surprisingly, it's more enjoyable than the first "Ghostbusters." It's a big comedy, but it's light on its feet, and the throwaway jokes are weightless—they *ping!* and dissolve in the air. You can't remember what you're laughing at, but you feel great. The script, by Harold Ramis and Dan Aykroyd, is a floating crap game, like the scripts for the Hope and Crosby "Road" pictures. Bill Murray holds it together, and assorted comedians—Sigourney Weaver, Rick Moranis, Annie Potts, Ernie Hudson, Peter MacNicol, Cheech Marin, Harris Yulin, Ramis & Aykroyd—come in and out of the scenes, dropping one-liners. The comic premise is that the collective angry energy of Manhattanites is feeding an underground river of boiling slime, which is swelling; our bad vibes are literally destroying the city. Directed by Ivan Reitman; cinematography by Michael Chapman.—P.K. (7/10/89) (34th St. East, Coronet, Art Greenwich Twin, and National Twin; through Aug. 1. . . . ¶ Olympia; through Aug. 8. . . . ¶ Plaza; starting Aug. 2.)

Hands Across the Table (1935)—Carole Lombard as a manicurist on the lookout for a wealthy husband meets Fred MacMurray, a fellow who grew up rich but is now broke and intends to marry an heiress. Cynical about romance, these two hang out together while waiting to land their prospective mates. Hers is to be a kindly millionaire (dreary Ralph Bellamy); his is the pineapple king's daughter (Astrid Allwyn). But what you expect to happen happens. As the manicurist puts it, in blunt, archetypal thirties terms, "Hard-boiled Hannah was going to fall in love with a bankroll! You can't run away from love." This isn't one of the first-string slapstick romances of its period, but it's a pretty fair example of the second string. Basically uninspired, it's determinedly irreverent. You can see the jokes being set up; when the payoff comes, you're already tired. But MacMurray knows how to read a good line when he gets one, and though he isn't the subtlest of farceurs, that works just fine with Lombard because of her gift for uninhibited comedy. Lombard is the rare performer whose enjoyment of her own jokes adds to the audience's pleasure. Mitchell Leisen, directing his first comedy, had Ernst Lubitsch, the production chief at Paramount, guiding him. With William Demarest, Ruth Donnelly, Marie Prevost, and Edward Gargan. From a Viña Delmar story, adapted by Norman Krasna, Vincent Lawrence, and Herbert Fields.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 3.)

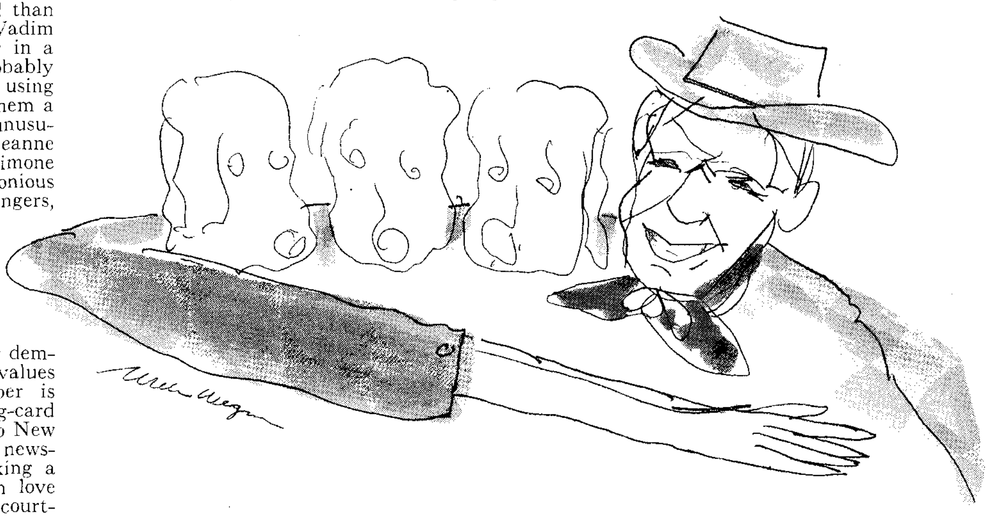
Honey, I Shrunk the Kids—A contraption invented by a suburban nerd scientist (Rick Moranis) cuts both his kids and the neighbors' down to size: a quarter of an inch. Unaware of what has happened, and unable to hear their pipsqueak cries, Dad sweeps them into a dustpan, dumps them in a garbage bag, and hauls the bag out to the curb. The kids have to make their way back to the house across the (not very recently mowed) lawn—a long trek for tiny, tiny legs. There are adventures, of course, engineered by the sort of special-effects "magic" that probably even the youngest audiences have learned by now to dread. The real surprise of this movie—which was directed by Joe Johnston, an effects specialist from Industrial Light & Magic, and which carries an immense list of technical credits (including a "Scorpion Crew," a "Bee Sequence Crew," and a "Stop Motion Ant Crew")—is that it's friendly, good-humored, and unpretentious. Johnston manages to scale down not only the kids but also the movie's sense of its own importance. He seems aware that the only point of "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" is to make children giggle (and adults smile); for all the money and elaborate technology needed to produce this silliness, the picture never looks fussy. It's short and brisk and it doesn't shrink your intelligence any more than it absolutely has to. Also with Matt Frewer, Marcia Strassman, and Kristine Sutherland; Jared Rushton, Amy O'Neill, Thomas Brown, and Robert Oliveri are the kids. The imaginative cinematography is by Hiro Narita—T.R. (Quad Cinema, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Gotham Cinema; through Aug. 8.)

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade—This mediocre third film in the Indiana Jones trilogy—a reprise of the first, "Raiders of the Lost Ark"—is a mixture of cliffhanger and anti-Nazi thriller and religious spectacle. It's enjoyable, but familiar, and the action lacks the exhilarating, leaping precision that the director, Steven Spielberg, is famous for. The only real spin is in the slapstick teamwork of Harrison Ford, as the archeologist-adventurer Indy, and Sean Connery, as Indy's father, a medievalist who's too engrossed in his studies to pay much attention to his daredevil son's triumphs. With River Phoenix playing Indy as a boy, Alison Doody, Denholm Elliott, John Rhys-Davies, and Julian Glover. The screenplay, by Jeffrey Boam, is based on a story devised by the producer George Lucas and Menno Meyjes.—P.K. (6/12/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Gemini; through Aug. 3.)

Lawrence of Arabia (1962)—If you went to see it under the delusion that it was going to be about T. E. Lawrence, you probably stayed to enjoy the vastness of the desert and the pleasures of the senses that a huge movie epic can provide. Directed by David Lean, from a script by Robert Bolt, loosely based on Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," this picture fails to give an acceptable interpretation of Lawrence, or to keep its action intelligible, but it is one of the most literate and tasteful and exciting of expensive spectacles. The central figure is played quite stunningly by Peter O'Toole, though he seems to be doing "Lord Jim"—which he was cast in a couple of years later (and then it looked as if he were doing Lawrence all over again). Bolt and Lean turn the hero into such a flamboyant poetic enigma that he is displaced in the film by a simpler hero—Omar Sharif's Ali, a handsome sheikh with liquid brown eyes and conventionally sympathetic lines to speak. As it became apparent that most people in the audience hadn't the remotest idea of what the Arabs and the Turks were doing in the First World War, or which was which, or why the English cared, the question raised by the movie was, Can complicated historical events and a complex hero really get across in a spectacle? With Alec Guinness, José Ferrer, Anthony Quinn, Arthur Kennedy, Jack Hawkins, Claude Rains, Anthony Quayle, and Donald Wolfit. Cinematography by Freddie Young; music by Maurice Jarre. (The film, substantially cut after its first release, has been restored to a more or less definitive version, running 217 minutes.)—P.K. (Warner.)

Les Liaisons Dangereuses (1959)—Valmont and Juliette, the eighteenth-century characters in the Laclos novel, are former lovers who, writing to each other about their strategies, targets, and fresh conquests, turn love into something as studied and calculated as war. They take the love out of love. Modernizing the story, the director, Roger Vadim, ties things up rather neatly by having Valmont (in a tired, too-sweet performance by Gérard Philipe—his last) and Juliette (Jeanne Moreau at her ravaged best) married. In Laclos the pleasure seems to be in carrying out the plan, achieving the victory—a triumph of austere, rational conquest; in Vadim's version a sensuous aura surrounds and permeates the objects. The first scene of Marianne (Annette Stroyberg) in the snow, her mouth open in laughter for a romantic eternity, isn't on a much higher level than the *Playboy* bunnies of the month; Vadim uses sex and jazz all mixed together in a cheap and sensational way that was probably exotic for the French in the fifties. But, using these elements, he attempts to give them a rhythm and feeling that are, at least, unusually high-class commercialism. With Jeanne Valerie, Jean-Louis Trintignant, and Simone Renant. Background music by Thelonious Monk; party music by the Jazz Messengers, with Kenny Clarke. In French.—P.K. (Public Theatre; through Aug. 3.)

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town (1936)—Frank Capra-style folk humor is better in slightly shorter doses (this runs almost two hours and the pace could be quicker), but there's no use fighting one's enjoyment of this homey fantasy demonstrating the triumph of small-town values over big-city cynicism. Gary Cooper is Longfellow Deeds, the sincere greeting-card poet from New England who comes to New York; Jean Arthur is the wiseacre newspaperwoman who starts out by making a public joke of him and then falls in love with him. The film culminates in a courtroom sequence that introduced the word "pixillated" to just about every American home, and set people to examining each other's casual scribbles or sketches—their "doodles." Robert Riskin adapted the Clarence Budington Kelland *SatEvePost* story, "Opera Hat." The cast includes George Bancroft, Lionel Stander, Douglass Dumbrille, Ruth Donnelly, Emma Dunn, Raymond Walburn, Warren Hymer, Walter Catlett, Mayo Methot, and Jameson Thomas as the twitcher. Capra took the Academy Award for Best Director.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Aug. 3-5.)



Steve Martin, now in "Parenthood"

Parenthood—With Steve Martin, directed by Ron Howard. (Reviewed in this issue.) (34th St. East, Baronet, Coronet, U. A. East, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and National Twin; starting Aug. 2.)

Passport to Pimlico (1949)—British comedy with a fine flavor and wonderful details, though the whimsy is rather self-congratulatory. An ancient royal charter ceding Pimlico to the Dukes of Burgundy is unearthed in a London shell hole, and the people of Pimlico are "just British enough to fight for our rights to be Burgundians." Margaret Rutherford is the historian who gives scholarly sanction to an independent Pimlico; Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne are the protocol-ridden bureaucrats trying to handle the crisis; Stanley Holloway and Hermione Baddeley are shopkeepers. The ingenious author, T. E. B. Clarke, got the idea from a wartime newspaper item: the Canadian government transferred title to the room in which the exiled Princess Juliana was about to bear a child to the Netherlands; in this way the child would technically be born on Dutch soil and thus be a legal heir to the throne. Henry Cornelius directed; music by Georges Auric. With Raymond Huntley, John Slater, Jane Hylton, and Sidney Tafler.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 8.)

Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills—The script, by Bruce Wagner, from a satirical sex-farce plot he devised with the director, Paul Bartel, calls for something like the goosey stylized acting that Charles Ludlam perfected at the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, but Bartel has directed with his usual home-movies sluggishness. Two houseboys, a cynic (Ray Sharkey) and a romantic (Robert Beltran), who work in adjacent mansions, bet on which one will be the first to make out with the other's employer—one a divorcée (Mary Woronov), the other a widow (Jacqueline Bisset). The households include various siblings, offspring, and hangers-on (Arnetia Walker, Ed Begley, Jr., Wallace Shawn, Paul Mazursky, Rebecca Schaeffer, and others)—all of them libidinous or gaga. Arnetia Walker manages to bring in some zesty horseplay, and Bisset's amused calm is occasionally pleasant, but mostly this is just mistimed, failed camp, and some of the lines that are meant to be screamingly dirty-funny come out screamingly sour.—P.K. (23rd St. West Triplex, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

sex, lies, and videotape—With James Spader, Peter Gallagher, Andie MacDowell, and Laura San Giacomo; directed by Steven Soderbergh. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema Studio; starting Aug. 4.)

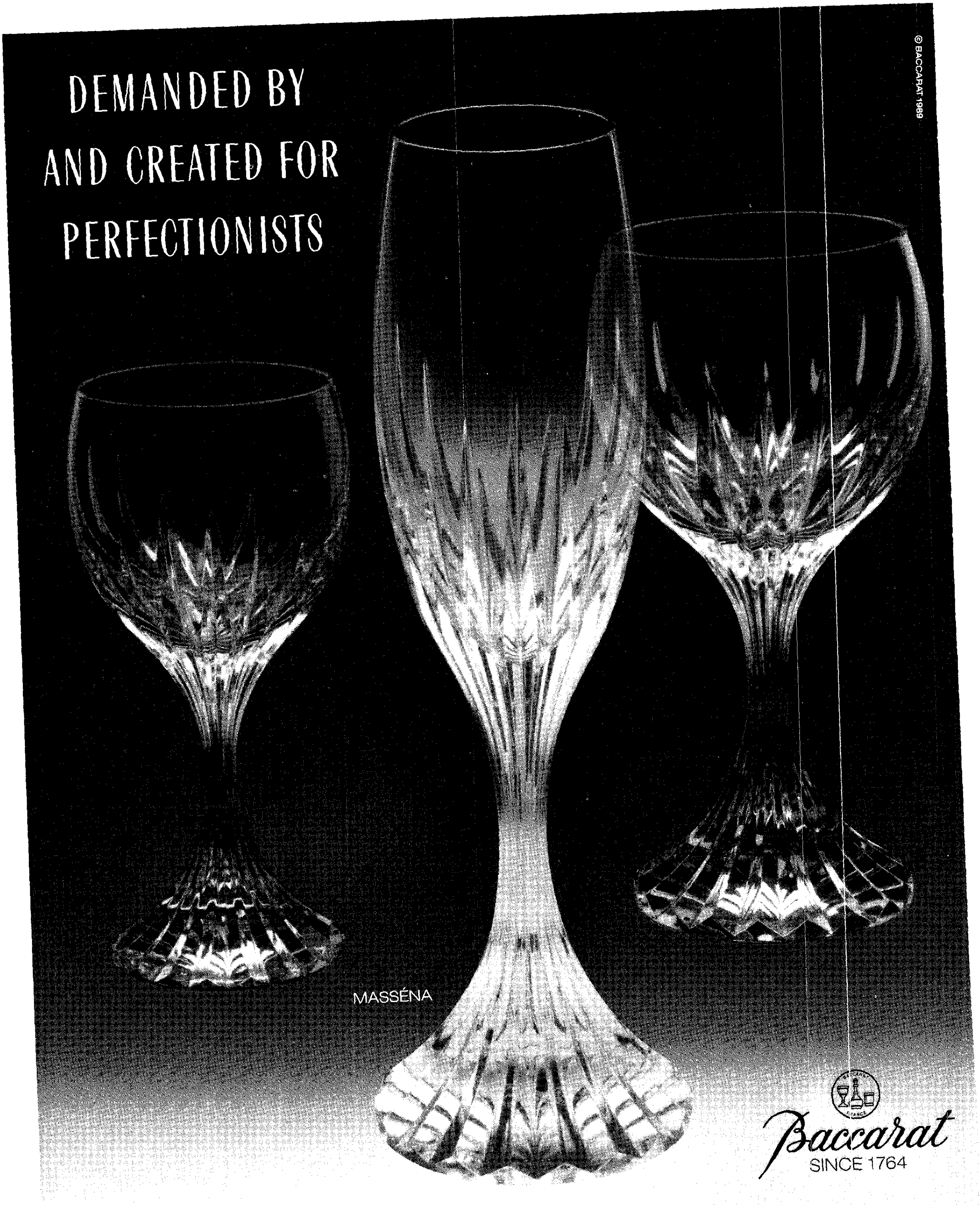
Something Wild (1986)—Jonathan Demme's romantic screwball comedy isn't just about a carefree kook (Melanie Griffith) and a pompous man from Wall Street (Jeff Daniels). The script—a first by E. Max Frye—is like the working out of a young man's fantasy of the pleasures and punishments of shucking off middle-class behavior patterns. The movie is about crossing over—about getting high on anarchic, larcenous behavior and then being confronted with ruthless, sadistic criminality. This rough-edged comedy has a freedom that takes off from its genre framework; it's really screwball: it breaks conventions and turns into a scary slapstick thriller. Demme weaves the stylization of rock videos into the fabric of the movie. Starting with David Byrne and Celia Cruz singing Byrne's "Loco De Amor" during the opening credits, and ending with a reprise of Chip Taylor's "Wild Thing" by the reggae singer Sister Carol East, who appears on half of the screen while the final credits roll on the other half, there are almost fifty songs (or parts of songs), several of them performed onscreen by The Feelies. The score—it was put together by John Cale and Laurie Anderson—has a life of its own that gives the movie a buzzing vitality. This is a party movie with both a dark and a light side. With Ray Liotta as the dangerous, menacing Ray; Dana Preu as the kook's gloriously bland mother; Margaret Colin as bitchy Irene; and, tucked among the many performers, John Waters and John Sayles.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 4-5.)

Trouble in Paradise (1932)—Perhaps the most shimmering of the romantic-comedy collaborations of the director Ernst Lubitsch and the writer Samson Raphaelson, this film is a make-believe world of the thirties preserved intact. Herbert Marshall is so adept at the silky tricks written into his lines that he creates a hushed atmosphere. He plays a career jewel thief and, as his partner, Miriam Hopkins, quick and darting, always has her feelers out, along with her kittenish claws. These two are accomplished seducers, and in this movie witty seduction is indistinguishable from love itself. Kay Francis is the wealthy widow whose face takes on a yearning expression once she sees Marshall; desire makes her warm and languid. The movie is full of suave maneuvers and magical switcheroos; in its light-as-a-feather way, it's perfection. With Charles Ruggles, Edward Everett Horton, C. Aubrey Smith, Robert Greig, and Tyler Brooke as the singing Venetian garbageman. Remotely based on a Hungarian play by Aladar Laszlo.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 4-5.)

Vincent: The Life and Death of Vincent van Gogh (1987)—Paul Cox's documentary biography of the great painter is earnest, honorable, and uninspired. Cox has the good idea to tell the story in the artist's own words: the voice-over narration consists entirely of excerpts from letters written by van Gogh to his brother Theo. (They are read, with tremendous solemnity and perhaps an excess of actorly skill, by John Hurt.) But Cox's use of the letters is crude: van Gogh's raw, anguished meditations on life and art are presented without irony, as if he really were a profound thinker. The words actually dominate the images; at times, the beautiful paintings function only as illustrations of the deep thoughts. Cox also includes endless footage of Dutch and French countryside, as well as a handful of staged tableaux—peasants eating potatoes, a scene in a cabaret, the painter's funeral. It's all much too pretty—"painterly" in a horribly naïve way. He seems to be trying to compete with van Gogh as a maker of images; he loses. Cox's excesses mirror van Gogh's, but his art doesn't: in this film, the light always seems to be coming from the wrong direction.—T.R. (Bleecker Street Cinema; through Aug. 3.)

When Harry Met Sally . . .—With Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan, directed by Rob Reiner. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Beekman, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; through Aug. 8.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her long-time live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. In Spanish.—P.K. (11/14/88) (Cinema Studio; through Aug. 3. . . . ¶ Carnegie Screening Room; starting Aug. 4.)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THE
NEW YORKER

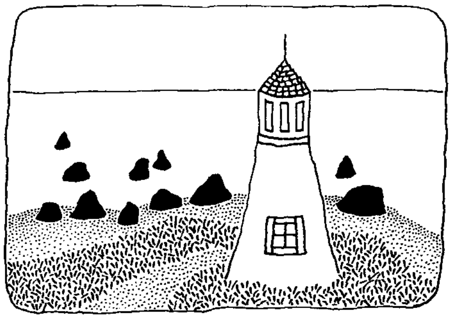
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

SURGEON GENERAL C. EVERETT KOOP recently stepped down after serving nearly eight years as the top guardian of the nation's health. Dr. Koop's exit from government service was a remarkably quiet one, considering all the hullabaloo that surrounded his tenure. There have been few media wrapups and retrospectives, despite the fact that Dr. Koop is likely to go down in history as one of the most controversial physicians to have held the Surgeon General's post. In his frequent interviews with the press and in his reports to the public Dr. Koop insisted on using words that are considered taboo in much of the country—"condom," "penis," "rectal intercourse"—not to shock but, rather, to dispel the dark mystery that cloaked the AIDS epidemic. To Dr. Koop, there was nothing immoral about medical wisdom. By using those banned words, the Surgeon General accelerated the ongoing sexual education of America. He also alienated many of his supporters on the right: they accused him in the bitterest terms of abandoning his fundamentalist Christian convictions and promoting illicit sexual behavior. "I'm not the nation's chaplain general—I'm the surgeon general," Dr. Koop would counter. Meanwhile, liberals, including those on Capitol Hill who in 1981 had vehemently opposed his nomination, because of his impassioned stand against abortion and his reputation for moral fervor (Dr. Kook, they tagged him), took to hailing him as a new folk hero. But throughout this political firestorm Dr. Koop insisted that he was the same man: the same reverence for human life that had impelled him, as a distinguished surgeon at Philadelphia's Children's Hospital, to operate on horribly deformed infants no other doctors would go near now drove him to take bold measures against the spread of AIDS. Explicit safe-sex education for the general public, and care and protection for those stricken with the disease—these were the twin pillars of Dr. Koop's public-health strategy.

Since the late nineteenth century, moralism has vied with medicine in the nation's crusade against sexually transmitted diseases, and the former has generally prevailed. In the days before penicillin, religious and political leaders spoke of the "spiritual value of syphilis" as a means of controlling the flames of desire. Similarly, there were members of the Reagan Administration, such as the White House communications director Patrick Buchanan and the domestic-policy adviser Gary Bauer, who viewed AIDS as divine revenge against the sinful. "The silver lining in this tragic situation," Bauer was moved to tell a journalist in 1987, "is that it may get people . . . to behave. . . . There is nothing like the threat of death to get the glands under control."

Dr. Koop, despite his own deep religious beliefs, took no such satisfaction in this viral terror. He rejected the tendency to scorn those afflicted with the disease, to separate the "sinners" from the "saved." Like Camus, he believed that the only means of fighting a plague is common decency. "In this terrible and fearsome period," he said in a 1987 speech, "I maintain—as a physician, as a scientist, but also as a human being—that man cannot be denied. AIDS would have us do that. But we cannot."



Dr. Koop can take credit for subduing some of the Reagan Administration's more intemperate impulses, including a proposal to institute nationwide mandatory AIDS testing. If that extreme measure had not been blocked by the Surgeon General, it might have sown widespread panic by producing many false positives among low-risk groups. It might also have driven underground those gays and other high-risk individuals who quite understandably fear breaches in medical confidentiality. The former Surgeon General can take satisfaction in the Bush Administration's somewhat more compassionate approach to the AIDS crisis. The President has made it known that he opposes discrimination against AIDS patients, and he has appointed people who are knowledgeable about the disease, among them a housewife with AIDS, to the National Commission on AIDS (in contrast to the shockingly uninformed panel appointed by Reagan). And the First Lady has followed in Dr. Koop's footsteps by making a point of comforting the afflicted.

Still, these efforts are largely symbolic. In its current budget the Bush Administration has requested a billion six hundred million dollars for AIDS-research-and-prevention programs—a figure that seems impressive but is significantly less than what the federal government's health agencies estimate is necessary for the enormous task.

While we wait for a scientific break-through that can finally lift the siege of AIDS, public education remains our best form of protection. This is the field in which the Surgeon General made his greatest contribution. It had long been standard practice to use sexual allusion to sell commercial products on television, but until the Surgeon General's Report on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome was issued, in 1986, it was not deemed acceptable to discuss prophylaxis in the mass media. Dr. Koop's bluntly worded report allowed the word "condom" to enter polite American discourse, and the country's first mass-media condom advertising—Ansell Inc.'s "I'll do a lot for love, but I'm not ready to die for it"—conspicuously referred to the Koop document. Yet here, too, Dr. Koop's mission is far from completion. Safe-sex advertising in the United States remains remarkably coy, and therefore of limited educational value, because of the prudery of religious and political pressure groups and the timidity of television executives. The most explicit TV spot developed so far by the federal Centers for Disease Control featured a young man slipping on a sock and telling viewers, "That wouldn't really save my life, but there's something as simple that could." According to the C.D.C., even this subtle little message ran into opposition from most TV stations. "AIDS—Don't Die of Ignorance" is one widely disseminated public-health message these days. But, in spite of the best efforts of C. Everett Koop, many Americans still do die of just that.

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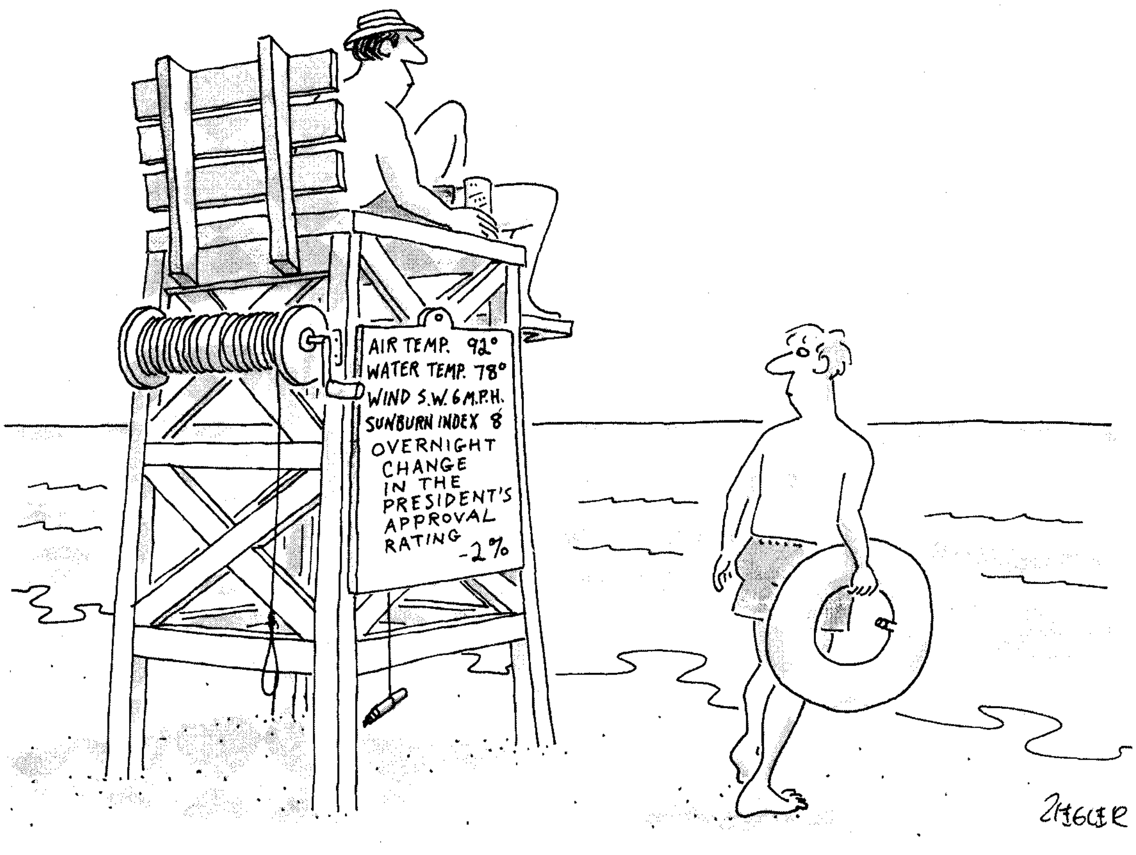
THE Cold War may be over, and the Communist world crumbling like a row of sand castles in the tide, but not for the creative spirits in Czechoslovakia. František Stárek, the editor of an underground magazine called *Vokno* (*The Window*), was sentenced a few weeks ago to two and a half years in prison for, along with the usual vague offense of "incitement against the state," the crime of publishing in his magazine some pictorial satire of that amiable new concept *perestroika*—or, in Czech, *přestavba*, which in English approximates to "restructuring," or "reconstruction." We don't know what Stárek's jokes were, but on the day of his sentencing he read a stirring statement in court, which went, in part: "The frosty wind of Cold War blew from the speech of Mr. State Prosecutor. Luckily, public prosecutors and majors of State Security do not decide future political developments. All they can manage is to temporarily sabotage positive social developments. The citizens of the European House of the Future would certainly find it odd that in our interrogation rooms statues of Stalin still stand. . . . I am charged with printing cartoons caricaturing *přestavba*. But in my opinion the worst caricature of *přestavba* is this trial. My most ardent wish is that the wave of political trials which is now taking place be the last of its kind in our country."

The enforcers of controlled speech behind the rusting Iron Curtain are like policemen in a long-besieged city who are cracking down on merrymakers even as the walls fall. Czechoslovakia, the last and least likely state to be enlisted in the Soviet bloc, waits for the tide of "positive social developments" to wash in, and still, as in "The Joke," Milan Kundera's novel of twenty-two years ago, the price of a jest is jail. Jokes aimed at *perestroika* are evidently as liable to offend as jokes in favor of it. The liberation of Eastern Europe from totalitarian absurdity is far from achieved, and looks to be long and ticklish. This month will mark the twenty-first anniversary of the arrival of Russian tanks in Prague to reverse the premature thaw of the "Prague Spring." As Czechoslovakia still shivers in its dreary Cold War wraps, Poland and Hungary are actively trying to negotiate what no European nation, including Yugoslavia, has thus far managed—the casting off of Communism. The nineteen-nineties will see the attempted economic unification of Western Europe, with the surrender of its old currencies and chauvinisms. May windows be thrown open also in the East.



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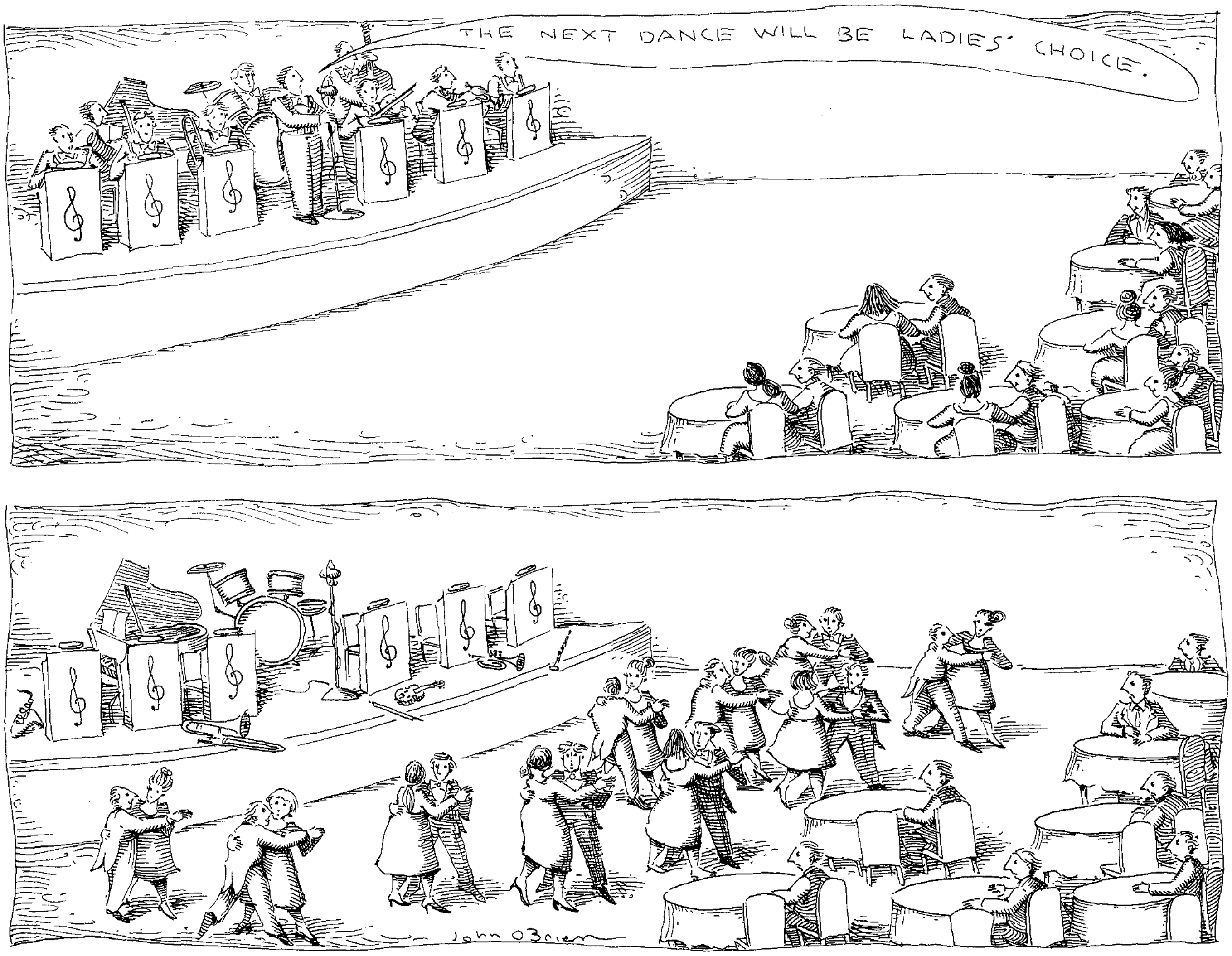
Autograph

A TRANSPLANTED Midwesterner writes:

Yesterday was my wife's birthday, and, according to our custom, I woke up before


THE NEXT DANCE WILL BE LADIES' CHOICE.

dawn and sneaked out of bed. Our custom is that the birthday person sleeps until the family tiptoes in and wakes her up with singing and banging on pans and hauls her smiling to the table and sits her down to a perfect candlelit breakfast next to a stack of gifts. It was 6 A.M. I put on water for tea and sliced some nectarines, which she likes to eat with goat yogurt, and got out a block of her favorite cheese, which gives off an aroma like yesterday's hiking socks. The kids had baked rolls the night before. I set the glass-top table on the terrace with white plates, wineglasses for the orange juice, candles, and American-flag napkins, and then, because it was too early to wake the household and also because I am a cook who believes that too much is just barely enough, I decided to go out and find fresh bagels and lox and some more fruit. Also because that's a sweet time for a Midwesterner to walk around town. New York at six o'clock on Saturday morning is as close to being like Minneapolis as New York ever gets.

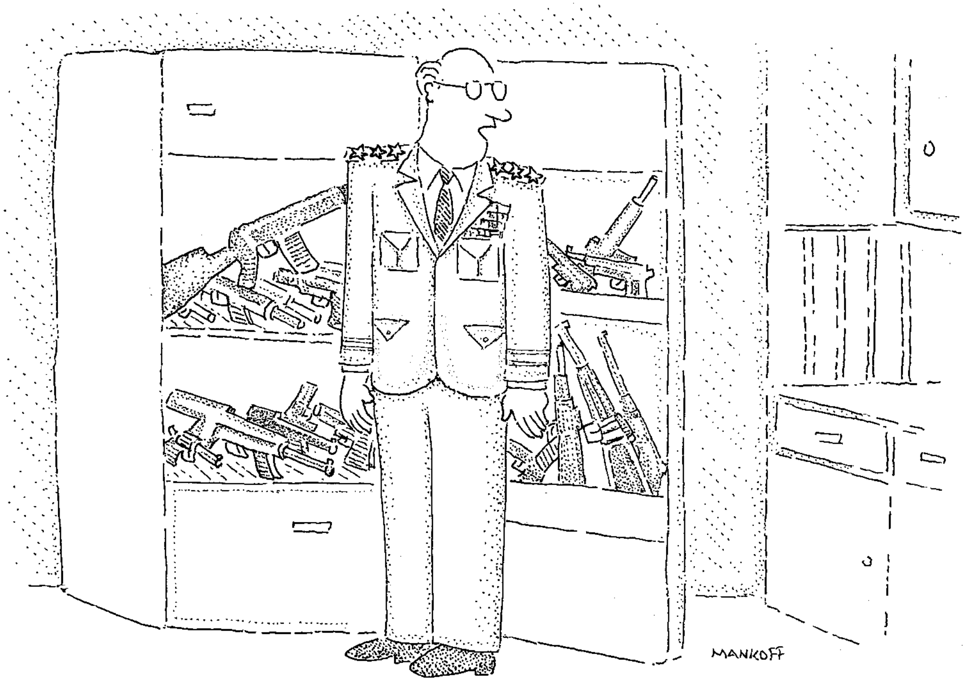
I headed toward a bagel bakery on Broadway around Eighty-first, thinking I would come across an all-night fruit market along the way, and I was swinging down Amsterdam Avenue when a man called to me from behind. He said, "Mister? Sir?" I've lived in New York long enough to be able to ignore panhandlers when I want to: the New Testament doesn't say a person has to be at the beck and call of the needy every waking moment, you know. But, feeling Midwesternly, I turned, and he came up to make his pitch. "I'm not bad," he was saying. "I'm not going to rob you, or anything." A young black man in an old tweed coat, torn sneakers, jeans; his hair was long, and tangled in long snarls. He smiled at me sweetly. He smelled slightly rancid, and he spoke fast, with a Southern accent and a slight lisp. He said, "I'm sorry. I don't like to do this. But I didn't have anyplace to sleep last night. I spent the night in the Park. Today is my twenty-ninth birthday. It really is. I'm from North Carolina, and I've been trying to get into a shelter—you know where the cathedral is? I tried up there, but they were full. There's another one on Ward's Island I'm trying to get to. My grandpa is in Bellevue. He's dying with cancer, and I want to be with him—that's why I'm here. My name is Kevin. I have this aunt who lives in Hoboken. If I had five or six dollars, I could go over there and look her up and stay with her until I can get back on my feet. I'm sorry to take your time like this, but I just need some help. Now, I've got these books." He brought out a handful of paperbacks from under his coat. "If you'd like to buy one, I'd sure appreciate it."

Incredibly, one of the books was by me. I saw it right away, of course. One was a romance in a pinkish cover, and one was a Danielle Steel, and one was my book. The cover was torn off, but not the inside cover, which had my picture on it, with me in clear-rim glasses, squinting, in jeans and a green sweater, sitting on the white steps of a house on West Twenty-second Street, where we used to live. He was telling me how he'd come by these books honestly. I reached into my pocket and pulled out all the money I had—about twenty-eight dollars. I had to do this. I gave it to him. "That's my book," I said. He handed it to me. "No, you keep it," I said. "I just meant that it's my book. I wrote it." He looked at the photograph: it was me.

He seemed astonished to be holding a book with a picture of a man who had just given him a small wad of money. Then he touched my arm and said, "I want you to sign it for me." He dug in his pockets and got out a ballpoint. He said, "Make it out to Kevin and Anthony—he's my best friend. Oh, he's not going to believe this! This is incredible!" But the pen didn't work. "Oh, no, this is terrible!" he cried. He looked up and down the street. He moaned, "I *got* to find a pen." He approached a woman walking toward us—"Lady, could I borrow your pen?"—and she glanced away from him and walked on.

I had never seen panhandling from that perspective, and it struck me as genteel the way the beggar shut up when there was no eye contact. He didn't press his case even slightly. Kevin tried to borrow a pen from two more passersby, with no luck. I believe that if you were out walking at 6 A.M. in Minneapolis and a panhandler asked to borrow a pen you'd be interested—but never mind. We finally went into a deli a block away and got a pen from the clerk. I signed the book "With every good wish for a long & happy life," thinking that perhaps I should give him my phone number. Twenty-eight dollars doesn't go far in New York. But I didn't.

Back home, I made tea and woke up the kids, and we paraded into the bedroom, where she was still asleep, and rattled our pans and sang "Happy Birthday." It was cool and still on the terrace. We lit the candles. The city out beyond our little potted trees looked serene, though hazy. She opened her gifts: a poster, a scarf, a book of pictures, and a green balloon that inflated so big you couldn't get your arms around it. It looked like a giant grape. We also had individual balloons, with whistles in their necks, which when the balloons exhaled made loud cawing sounds. The day bounced along; we drove to Bear Mountain for a long hike, came home, slept, and took a major dinner that night at a restaurant. I thought several times, in a sentimental way, about Kevin out there in the city, as if somehow I could have made things right for him. He is, after all, my only homeless reader as far as I am aware. I've thought of him often since. Whatever his reason for getting my autograph, my signing the book means just one thing to me, and that is that I know his name: Kevin. Two years in this city, and finally I have *met* a homeless person.



"Hon, where's the butter?"

Slave Quilts

"QUILT" is a synonym for comforter, and when we think of quilts we think of quilting bees, cozy evenings with the sewing basket, and warm, soft coverings. So when we learned of the exhibition "Stitched from the Soul: Slave Quilts from the Ante-Bellum South," which opened recently at the Museum of American Folk Art, we were both surprised and curious. How, we wondered, would a slave in the American South have found the time to make a quilt? And where would she, or he, have got the materials? By coincidence, a few days earlier we had come upon a street scene unusually Felliniesque even for New York City: a handful of people on folding chairs watching a documentary about Frederick Douglass which was being projected onto a small movie screen that had been set up on the corner of 123rd Street and St. Nicholas Avenue by a neighborhood association. We stayed to watch, and then went home and reread the "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave."

To Douglass, who escaped from slavery in 1838, at the age of about twenty, freedom was no abstraction; he became the most eloquent of abolitionists, and his account of plantation life vividly suggests a life sentence in an uncommonly cruel prison camp. There is no mention of slaves' owning quilts. As a child, Douglass wore a knee-length shirt and slept in a corn bag on cold nights. Slaves, he reported, "find less difficulty from the want of beds, than from the want of time to sleep."

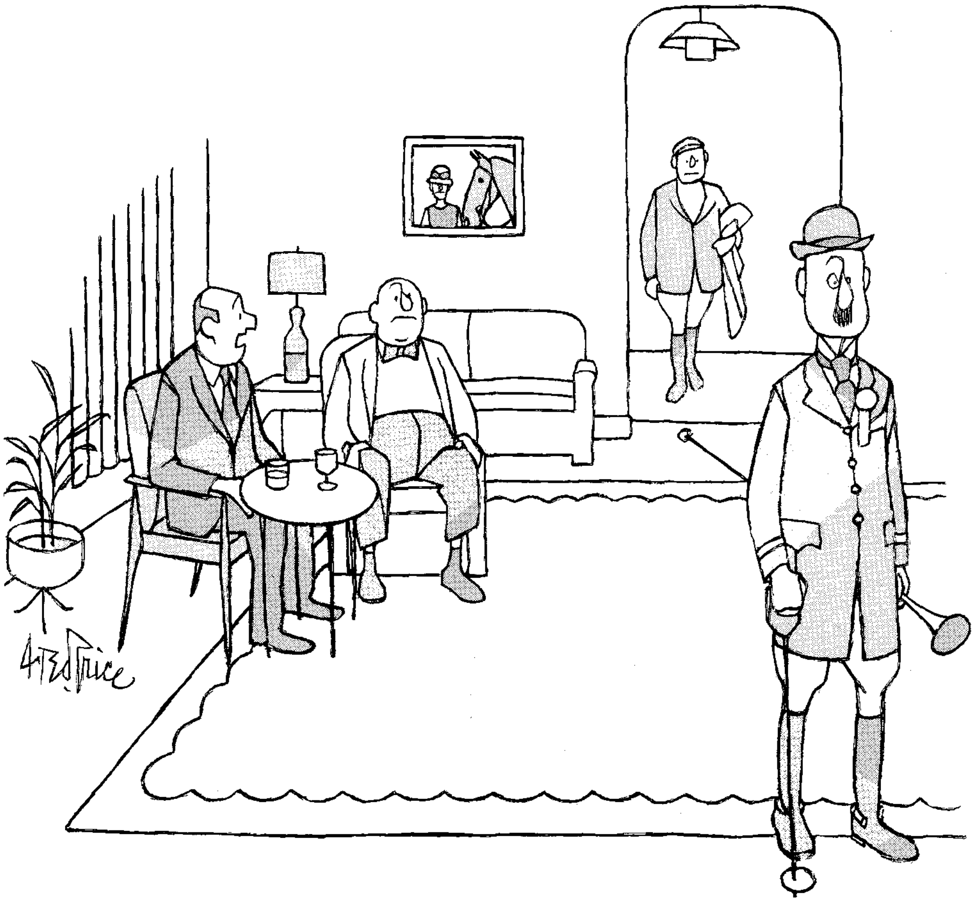
It occurred to us that quilting might simply have been the province of house slaves, but we couldn't resist putting our questions to Gladys-Marie Fry, the curator of the exhibit. "Those are the first two questions everyone asks me," she said. "How did they find the time, and where did they get the material? Well, some slaves worked as seamstresses, and made quilts for the plantation house, but slaves also made quilts for their own households. Many slaves had time off in the evenings and one day a week, and they had time off at Christmas and during the slow season. And they had money. A lot of slaves were able to earn what they called side money, and they used it to buy material." Slaves also used found materials, we learned, and making those into quilts was a way of adding some element of ease to their lives. A quilt could serve as either pallet or covering. More than that, it could be a work of art, a talisman, or a medium for preserving African culture—a visual as well as a physical comfort.

At a symposium held to mark the opening of the exhibit, we learned that some of the techniques of quilting—appliqué and piecework—would have been familiar to slaves from West Africa, where appliqué was done on leather, and where *kente* cloth, a brightly striped fabric woven on narrow looms, was sewn together in offset patterns. Some quilts made by ex-slaves and their descendants depict scenes from the Bible or from history: one slide we saw was of a quilt, made by the Negro History Club of Marin City, that depicted Frederick Douglass himself, in heroic proportions. Other post-bellum quilts are based on scenes from their makers' surroundings, or document their working lives—there were slides of quilts made from pieces of faded denim work clothes—or improvise on classic quilting patterns in what one speaker called "the visual equivalent of jazz."

Almost all the quilts in the exhibition, though, were made by skilled seamstresses for plantation owners. (According to Dr. Fry, quilts made by slaves for their own use got a lot of hard wear, and very few have survived.) While appliqué simply mimicking African leatherwork might not have had the edges turned down, in these quilts every edge is meticulously turned and stitched, and some of the borders are decorated with the technique called trapunto, in which intricately stitched patterns are set off by padding. Sewing was a valuable trade for a slave to acquire: she might be hired out to earn extra income for the plantation, and sometimes for herself. (Douglass, who before his escape was hired out in the Baltimore shipyards as a caulker, said that he was sometimes given six cents, "to encourage me," if he brought his master six dollars at the end of the week, and added, with characteristic frankness, "It had the opposite effect. I regarded it as a sort of admission of my right to the whole.")

Still, even in these quilts the symbols of traditional African beliefs can be found. A quilt made in New Orleans in 1852 by a man named Yellow Bill for his owners' wedding anniversary has a center patch in which four jaunty calico snakes—symbols of fertility in West Africa, and of Damballah, the Vodun god of fertility—surround a floral motif associated with Erzulie, the goddess of love. A crib quilt combining Christian and African iconography—crosses, suns, and coffins—uses the red and white of the Shango cult, and seems to be imbued with an unspeakable longing. And there are other pieces in the exhibit which seem to preserve an African aesthetic. A woven coverlet is stitched together the same way *kente* cloth is, so that the edges of the pattern don't line up, and some of the quilt patterns are expressive of the African preference for suggesting movement: there is a "butterfly" quilt, a "geese in flight" quilt, and a "Star of Bethlehem" quilt that uses red and green against a white background to set up a powerful, pulsating rhythm.

The butterfly quilt was made by a slave named Phyllis Biggs, who arrived in the New World from the Congo at the age of twelve or thirteen, in 1818—eleven years after the slave trade with Africa had been legally abolished. A wall plaque next to the quilt contains a quotation from her that goes a long way toward explaining the ingenuity of the slave quilters. "They stripped me of everything but my thoughts," Phyllis Biggs said. "But one day I balled up my fists and held up both my arms. With my left arm I held my freedom to think and my freedom to pray. With my right arm I held on to my religion, my art, and my music."



"I understand he has arranged to have his ashes strewn over the backstretch at Belmont."

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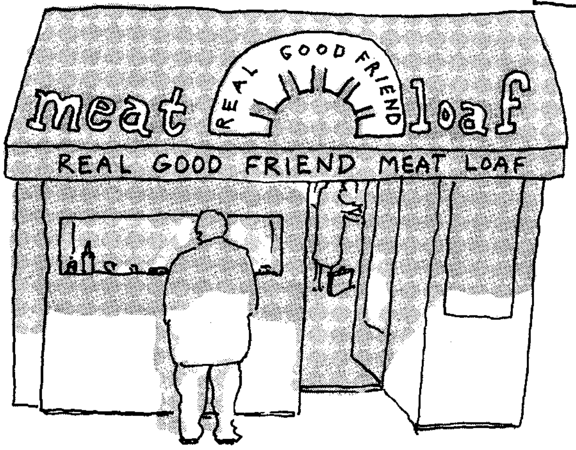
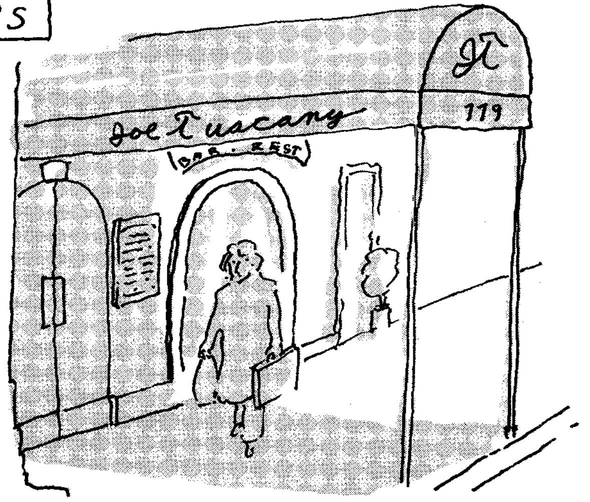
FOOD INSPECTION RESULTS

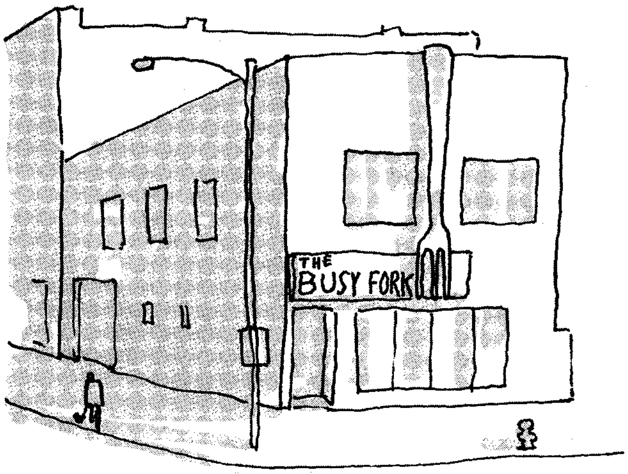
VIOLATIONS


meat loaf
REAL GOOD FRIEND
REAL GOOD FRIEND MEAT LOAF

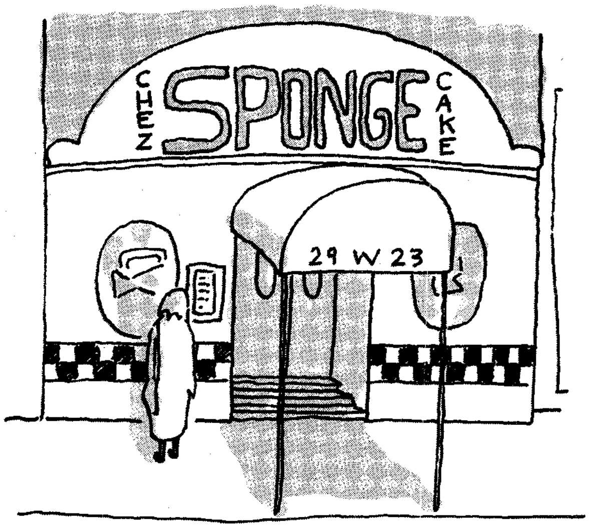
REAL GOOD FRIEND MEAT LOAF, 998 8TH AVE. OPEN COPIES OF "THE ART OF THE DEAL" IN FOOD-PREPARATION AREA. NO AMBIENCE PERMIT. CELEBRITY PHOTOS BEARING FORGED AUTOGRAPHS.


JT
119
Joe Tuscany
(BAR • REST)

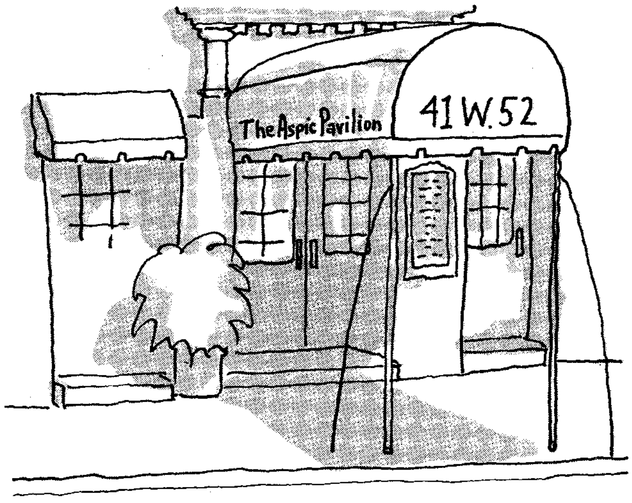
JOE TUSCANY, 119 E. 37TH ST. BOOTLEG SPRINGSTEE TAPES ON SOUND SYSTEM. CONCEPTUALLY FLAWED DESSERTS. HOLE GNAWED IN ESPRESSO MACHINE.


THE BUSY FORK

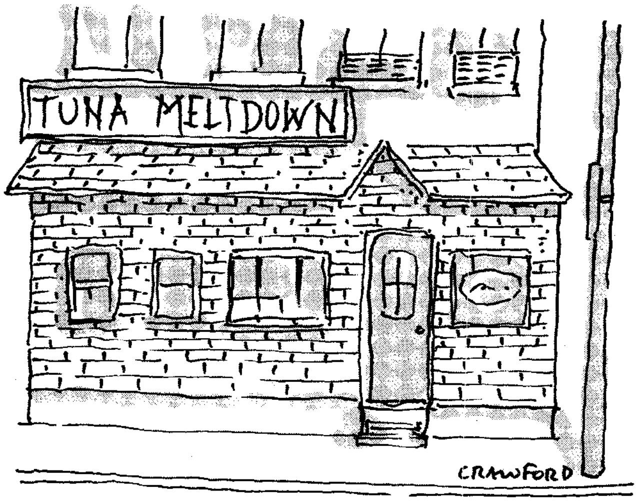
THE BUSY FORK, 458 AMSTERDAM AVE. NO BUSTLING CERTIFICATE. TRACES OF AN UNREWARDING BÉARNAISE ON MAÎTRE D'S ESPADRILLES. GIANT FAUX OLDENBURG OVER FRONT DOOR LACKS PANACHE.


CHEZ
SPONGE
CAKE
29 W 23

CHEZ SPONGE CAKE, 29 WEST 23RD ST. NO SUGAR-CRAVING-PREVENTION POSTER. "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" SUNG LISTLESSLY BY INDIFFERENT STAFF. NO INTIMACY-TEST KIT.


The Aspic Pavilion
41 W.52

THE ASPIC PAVILION, 41 W. 52ND ST. PORCINI-FRECKLED CRÈME FRAÎCHE ON PAY PHONE. WAITERS WITHOUT EQUITY CARDS. FREESIA ARRANGED IMPROPERLY.


TUNA MELTDOWN
CRAWFORD

TUNA MELTDOWN, 257 W. 14TH ST. KITCHEN TV ON FRITZ. SOUP DU JOUR ACTUALLY SOUP D'HIER. LAST ATMOSPHERE REPORT NOT AVAILABLE.

WHERE WE ALL SHOULD HAVE BEEN

THE last time my mother called she did not say hello. She said, "This is not a discussion, Ellen. I need you here. It's Diana. She drinks. And God knows what else. This morning she came in near dawn, wobbling in this awful way and smelling musty, damp—I can't describe it—and looking like something you find at the bottom of the clothes hamper. She didn't say a word, just wandered from lamp to lamp snapping them off. When she came to the pole lamp near the chair I'd been sitting in I felt so odd, almost terrified. I said to her, 'Diana, I'm here,' and she looked at me and said, 'Oh. Sorry. I didn't see you,' just as blasé as a cat. I'm telling you, Ellen, I've thought of everything. I've thought of drugs, but drugs don't leave a musty odor. Or do they?"

"None that I know of," I said.

"See, that's why you must come home. You understand children this age. You're the ranking expert. I haven't the mind for this."

She was referring to my job—which was juvenile social worker—and she was wrong. I was no expert. I saw twelve-year-olds who had blazed trails of mistake so twisted and confounding that I was stupefied. "Send up a flare," I once told a boy who lazed in my office chair. "You're going to have to show me where you are on this planet." Weeks later he killed his dog, then roamed the length of his alleyway aiming a target pistol at women and children.

"It could be anything," I told my mother. "Maybe just a wrongheaded risk, maybe nothing at all."

"Just please do not tell me it's a reaction to your father's death, all right? Everybody is an analyst all of a sudden—from those damn nuns to her bus driver. 'She's reacting to her father's death,' they say. 'Tell me about it,' I say. But it's precious little help when it comes to finding out where she's been until all hours. The child is *missing*. She sits right in front of me and is not there."

"Listen," I said. "Mom."

She stopped. Actually, she seized the silence. Then she said, "Don't. Do not, all right? I'm fifty-seven years old. I know the way the world feels before the other shoe drops. Trust me on this.

"Look," she went on. "I won't say I can't lose any more. That would be stupid. You've lost enough to understand how stupid that would be."

She wasn't talking then only about the loss of my father. She was talking also about my brief marriage, which my husband had left vaguely, turning off the sausages I was cooking one morning and sitting me down. "It doesn't feel right," he told me. None of the rest of what he said made any more sense than that. My mother believed I understood now, as certainly as she did, that life was one loss slowly opening into another.

"So I won't say I can't lose any more," my mother said. "But I will say this. I will say I can't lose any more alone."

"O.K.," I told her. "I'll be there. Friday. I'll take a sick day and leave early."

"Good," she said. "Thank you. All right. Hooray. I'm going to put Diana on now, and then I'm going to bed."

"Diana?" I said. "You mean she's there?"

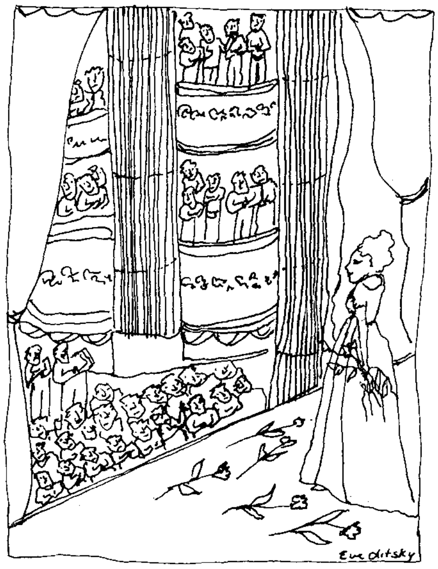
"Yes."

"Right there? She's listening?"

"Ellen, if I could, I would take the child's bedroom door off its hinges. It's the secrets I want to get rid of."

Once my mother had liked secrets. Once she herself had seemed to me to be a secret. Whenever I pressed with questions about boys she'd known or men she'd loved, her mouth had closed in a lovely line, urging restraint and silence. On special occasions, even her gowns and small silk shoes, dyed some shy pastel shade, seemed secrets that might one day, with luck, be mine.

Now age had made her raise her voice, or maybe it was only the telephone. We were a long-distance family—three women trying to locate one another in that strange space of absence between two cocked receivers. I squinted during all her calls. I'm sure she did, too. My sister Diana, who was sixteen, squinted even across a room.



"I'm putting her on now," she said.

I heard them exchange the receiver, but Diana didn't say anything.

"Diana," I said. "What's going on? Is it Dad, Diana?"

She wasn't going to tell me.

"Diana, say something."

"I don't know what to say," she told me. "You had better say something."

"It's going to be O.K."

"No, it's not." She sat silent again for a long minute, then hung up. A few moments later, she called back.

"It's not Dad," she told me. "I want that clear. It is not Dad, but if he were it, I'd say this to you. I'd say that after he died I could read your mind. You were walking around thinking, This is the worst time of my life. I'm divorced and now my father is *dead*." She said the word vengefully, as if I'd forced her to say it. "You were thinking, This has to be it. The bottom. The worst. It's over. Then you went marching off to make a new start. Well, I think that stinks. I think you stink. I'm still here, you know." She lowered her voice, and I understood that my mother had not yet gone to bed. "I'm still here with her."

"Diana."

"I'm going to hang up on you again."

"O.K.," I told her.

"All right," she said and did it.

THAT Friday, Kansas City was a gentle town to drive into—full of transitions, nothing bold; the flat farmland eased into a roll of hills, the Missouri swung through, and there it was: a skyline you could hold in one eye.

I paid my toll on the Broadway Bridge to a woman whose nameplate read "Ellowese." She smiled at me, tapped two nickels out of a handful into my palm, and as I crossed the river, the bridge surface clicking under my tires, I sat up and smiled back. There, to my right, in front of the old American Hereford building, serious, stolid, balanced on a pylon, was my father's favorite statue, the biggest statue of a bull I'd ever seen. Whenever we passed it on long car rides, my father had liked to tell the long story of its construction: how when it went up it faced east, but then there had been problems with Kansas and the view of its hind end they had over there. Someone even made a speech about it in the State Senate. So it was rolled around to face north and had stood up there since, a red light between its ears to ward off airplanes. It cheered me up to see it, made me feel safe, home, acquainted with the front and back doors. Ahead was a bull with its backside pointed in a diplomatic direction. Behind was a woman who spelled her name "Ellowese."

My mother had sold the old house and bought an apartment I'd not yet seen, in a midtown complex of hotels, shops, and condominiums. The entryway to her building was carpeted, canopied, decked with small trees, and watched over by a slight stooped man in a gold coat. He charmed me through the lobby, carried my bag to the elevator, and then reached inside it to punch the floor for me. "Welcome home, now," he said, and handed me a key. After the doors closed, I thought of our old house—a city house, with a warped front porch, a scrubby patch of lawn, two elm trees, and a sparsely gravelled driveway leading back to a garage near the alley. Changes in circumstances always frightened me a little. Just before I left town after my marriage, my father had lingered with me at the front door of our old house. "You be good," he told me, his hand light on my shoulder, "and stick to the path." He shook me gently. "You remember Harry Truman was a little haberdasher who left home and dropped the bomb."

SPINOZA

For the small boy lying in bed
in the summer shadows, his mind
stretching all the way to the edge
of the universe (which never arrives)
and the end of time (but *then* what?),
knowledge begins in pure awe
and a slowing of the breath
toward sleep, in gradual surrender
to everything that is of the night.

Even before you learned how
to think, you would stand for hours
in the scent of your father's world,
turning the pages, wondering
at the rows of dark spines, perhaps
humming to yourself a *canção*
you had overheard long before.
Sometimes he held you on his lap
and you watched the thick, white-haired finger
move slowly, from right to left.
Aleph: a bull with two prongs
and a dog's snout. *Bet:* a round tongue
in a square mouth. *Gimel:* a chair.
And the vowels floating below
the surface, like sleepy fish.
Not by those words but by
a resonance in your mind
did you know the essential lessons:
that the edge of doubt can be used
to cut through everything that has
hardened into belief;
that the only faith you could trust
was in your own clear awareness.

It is spring now, across the ocean.
Three centuries have gone by
since the rabbis' anathema drove you
from Amsterdam's brick-lined streets.
You were twenty-eight: a small man
with the olive skin and thick eyebrows
of a Portuguese Jew; courteous
to all, good-natured, noble
(if nobility means a passionate
disinterestedness). You liked
a pipe now and then, and felt
neither pity nor undue surprise
at the limitless varieties
of self-imposed human bondage
known as the habitable world.
Exquisitely frugal, like the snake
that forms a circle by holding
its tail in its mouth, you saved
your insight so that there would be
enough for a million days.
I see you in the early seventies
among the Dutch hippies spaced out
on legal hash, the bored women
in garter belts and high heels
on display in the windows, ghosts
of the old Jews Rembrandt
loved to paint, and the small
lively ghost of Anne Frank.
You are inside your shop, still making
lenses for the mind of Europe.
There is not much room. I sit down
on a wooden bench. You offer me
a glass of apple juice. You say,
leaning on the counter, "Rest easy.
All of them have their place
inside eternity. They are
perfect—that is to say, real:
a conclusion not easy to realize.
But all things excellent
are as difficult as they are rare."

—STEPHEN MITCHELL

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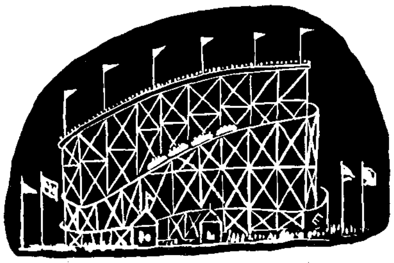
The apartment had double doors, burnished oak with two brass knockers. I went in feeling ill-advised, half expecting someone like Loretta Young to come sweeping out to meet me. When I saw the grandfather clock from the old house, I closed the door behind me. The place had a view. Just past the living and dining rooms, past overstuffed furniture and glass end tables I'd never seen, the city rose up in sharp right angles through a wide picture window. It looked substantial, right outside the window like that. While I was standing there, the clock, which had never worked in my lifetime, struck four. No one was home.



I went into my mother's room. Except for pictures of my sister and me, it was wholly new, low-slung and contemporary in black and white. Everything looked exact, definite, consciously placed: crystal perfume bottles spaced so evenly they seemed to quiver, one shrill note shy of shattering. I could hear my own breath, and then I heard someone at the door.

It was Diana. She cursed quietly as I came down the hall and saw her, bent over, back to me, trying to work her key out of the door.

"Hey," I said. "Hi."

She jerked upright, slammed the

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door with her key still in it, and stood there breathing softly into her hand, as though she needed to assure herself. "Jesus." She touched her throat and forehead lightly. "I forgot about you."

She threw her books under the hat rack and slumped into a chair at the end of the dining table, pressing her forearms against her temples. "Wait," she said. "Give me a minute." I stood still and saw that she was taller, thinner, that she had let her hair grow, and that her hands trembled faintly just around the wrists. When she lifted her head to look at me, though, her hair fell away from her face to a sharp smile.

"What?"

"Nothing. The ghosts don't usually show up this early."

"Ghosts," I said. "This place is one minute old. I'm not even sure some of the doorknobs have fingerprints on them."

"Ha." She leaned back in her chair. "It is spooky." She stretched her legs in front of her, put her hands in her pockets, then looked at me. "Hey, do you have a cigarette? The bus driver took my cigarettes."

I found my pack, brought it and an ashtray to her chair, then offered my lighter. She did not look like someone from whom a bus driver could take anything. Extreme is how she looked. She was dressed all in black—light jacket, loose sweater, jeans, and short leather boots. Even her hair looked darker, folding down to her shoulders and cut in spikes around her face. Against it, her skin was so pale she looked ill and defiant. She smoked the cigarette, between thumb and forefinger, like a pretty gangster.

I sat down next to her at the table. "Didn't the doorman tell you I was up here?"

"I came in the back way," she said. "Old Solomon bugs me. I had a drink with him a couple nights, and now he thinks we're buddies."

"You drink with our mother's doorman."

"Twice." She gave me a smile I recognized and then let it fade to caution. "Just two times. Not at a bar or anything. I just sat with him down there. He's got a wastebasket full of ice and a bottle under a copy of the paper. Anyway, he's not a bad guy, really. He says he knew Bennie Moten. He knows all these facts, too—like did you know a yardbird was a chicken?"

"I knew that," I said, "and you know our mother did not mortgage the farm so that you could drink with her doorman."

She made a tinny sound in the back of her throat like a laugh swallowed. "You're right there." Slipping her boots off, she nudged them across the parquet floor to the hat rack and stared at them. I watched them with her.

Then she looked over at me in an earnest way. "Listen," she said. "Do you care if I play some music?"

"No."

"She bought a new stereo," Diana said, already out of her chair. "It remedies my day. All those nuns, you know."

"Sure."

She played a Count Basie record, an

old one, so scratchy the music seemed trapped inside a wall of rain. Diana seemed to be inside the rain with it. She sat in a wing chair she'd turned to face the picture window, and, both bare feet propped on the sill, she stared out over her toes at the afternoon traffic. Sunlight fell over her, dazzling her hair and blurring her profile. I wondered if she was trying to welcome me home in some distant way. I hadn't heard a Count Basie record in our house since Diana and I were little. Then my mother had liked to tidy to his music. She'd played it loud, too, in those days, the house swelling with sound and my mother moving absently through rooms. She'd empty a few ashtrays, scrub a pot, run a cloth over tabletops, but distantly, far away, as if she'd been transported; I was never sure where, though as a child I imagined some late-night place where ladies sat at tables in a pink glow, didn't wear gloves, and glanced over their shoulders just so—someplace where it was always after hours, that same beat, the same smoky room, someone frying pork chops in the back.

Before the record finished on the first side, the phone in the kitchen rang twice, then stopped. Diana turned the music off, and the silence was sudden, as though the building had just dropped out of a storm.

"That's Solomon's signal," she said. "She's home."

"I'm home," my mother said a moment later from the door. "Who left a key in the door?"

I stood up at the table as she came in. Holding a bag of takeout barbecue, she kissed me on the mouth, looked at me in a genuine way, brightly, eye to eye. "Hi," she said. "Smile at me."

I smiled.

"There." She touched my cheek gently. "You look fine. Snapshot quality. Thank God. Now we can eat ribs." She passed out the thick paper plates gaily, saying, "I said, 'Make them special, extra sauce. This is a reunion. All my chickens.' " My mother was a tall, dark-haired woman of high color. Gaiety always made her beautiful and me too shy to mention it. Diana came in from the living room. My mother gave her a quick hard look and placed the key on the table.

"Yours," she said. "And Mrs. Emory was waiting for me at the elevator again. I have given her permission to axe the door and set fire to the stereo the next time you play it so loud, which brings me to whether you took the bus home today?"

Diana slid into a chair without even pulling it from the table. She was very thin. "Yes, Ma'am," she said, folding her long hands in front of her. "I sat behind the driver and led a round of 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat.' "

My mother stared. Her head fell back one notch as if she'd been tapped lightly at the base of the skull. "I've got beer somewhere," she said, handing me a napkin without breaking her gaze, "though I imagine Diana would prefer a fifth of something vile, hold the glass."

"Listen." Diana patted the table twice, waited, then pushed back her chair. "I think I'll eat in the living room."

"Oh, fine. Great. Extraordinarily good." My mother held the napkin over my head. I looked up and saw a flush spread under her chin. "You can drink with us, you know. I'm not going to shoot you for it."

Diana stood at her place, shook her head at her ribs. "I'm going to sit at the window and watch the sunset," she said. "You're supposed to watch the sunset. People sing about it in songs." She picked up her plate and looked my mother dead in the face on her way out. "I'll be able to hear every word you say."

"Go," my mother said softly, sitting down next to me. "Watch the damn sunset."

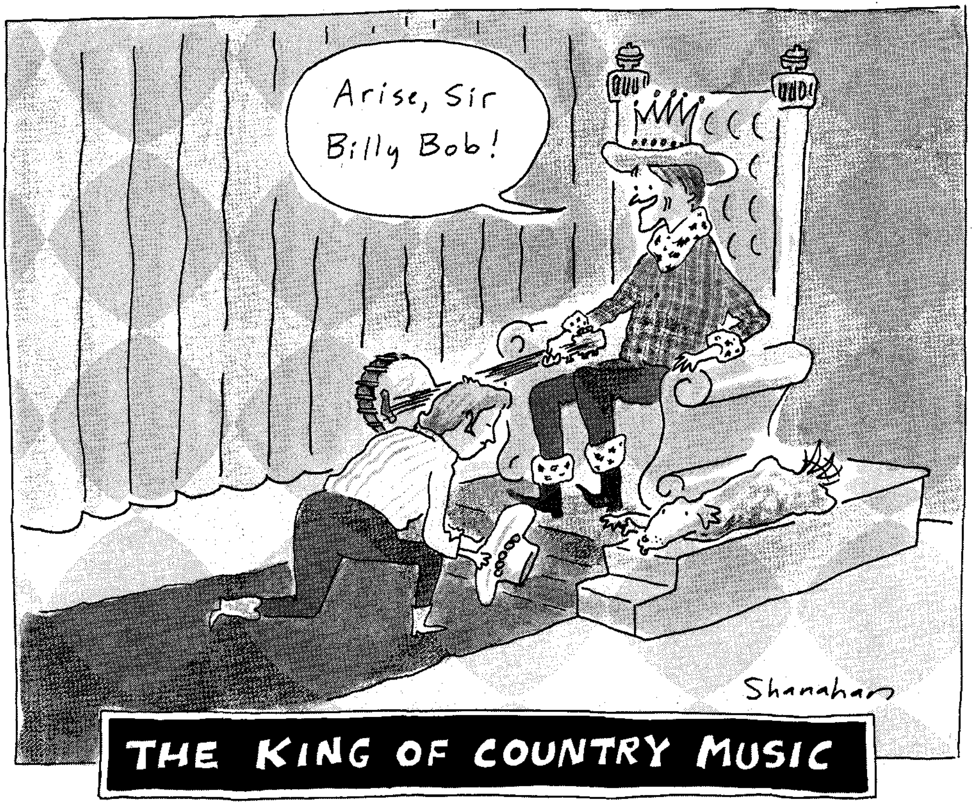
When she was gone, my mother sat quietly, crushing the napkin to a ball in her hand and stroking her forearm as though it ached.

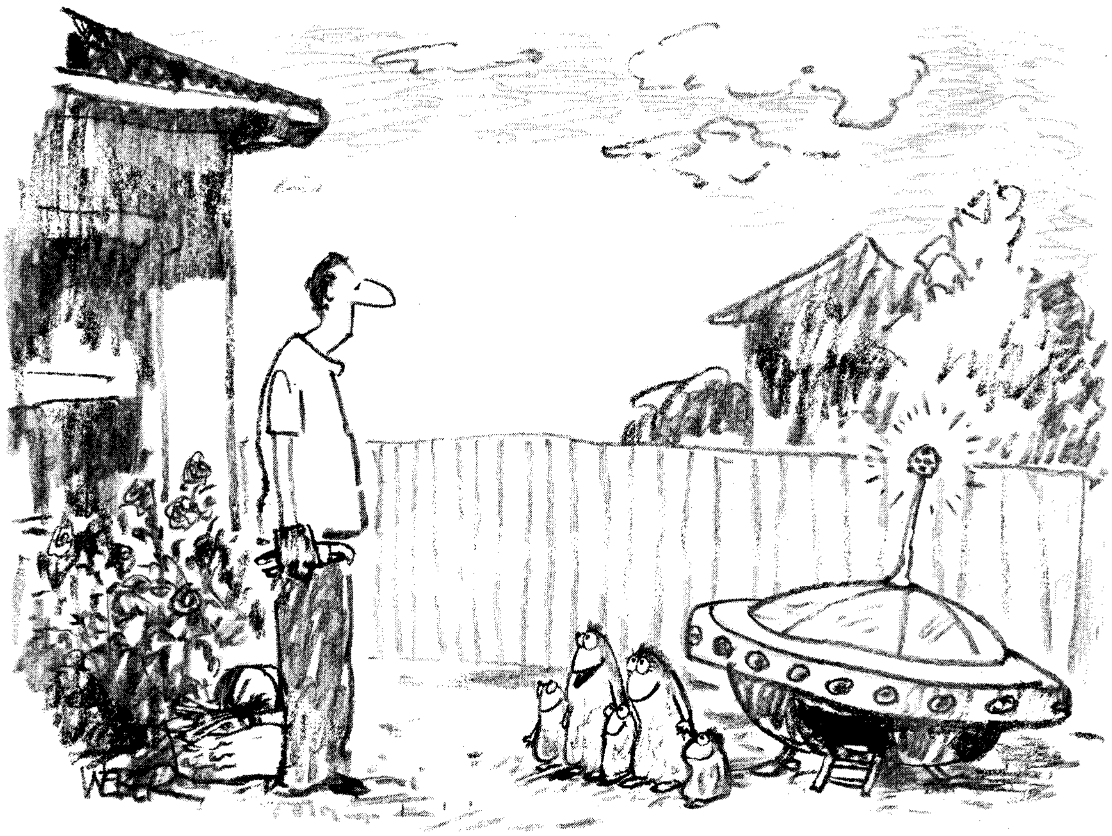
"She's different," I said.

My mother didn't look at me. "Aren't we all?" she said.

I sat up straighter, and my mother's hand moved briefly from her forearm to mine. "Sorry," she said. "Eat. This *is* a reunion. And I'm glad. And I really do think you look fine." She held up one finger, moved into the kitchen, and came back with a gallon of milk and two glasses.

"We'll set an example," she said, raising the jug in the direction of the living room. She poured half a glass of milk, then stopped. "She drinks too much for a girl, you know, and straight out of the bottle. I say, 'Diana, a drink in the af-





“*Are we near a Toys R Us?*”

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ternoon can be quieting, but get a glass, for God’s sake.’ Now she tries not to let me see. She tries not to let me see anything.” Looking past me to the living room, she shook her head. “Nights she’s just gone. ‘To the library,’ she’ll say. Right. But what? I can’t tail her.” She filled both glasses with milk and sat down.

“Nevertheless, something’s going on. Some nights it’s eerie. She comes back talking different. ‘Ya’ll,’ she’ll say. Once it was ‘I reckon.’ Who talks like that? *I reckon.* Good God, she’s found some blind bartender in a roadside lounge. I don’t know.” She pressed her hands against the table as if she might get up again.

“She’s young,” I said.

“Right.” She released the pressure on her hands and leaned back in her chair. “Exactly. And I’m old. We are not a matched set.”

My mother did not look old to me. She looked like her new furnishings—impeccable, ageless, and fine in a way that made me hesitant and proper—but she did not look old. I saw that she was watching me, waiting for me to tell her so, and I did. “You look better than ever.”

She brightened when I said it, straightened her spine and smiled. “Oh, it’s just the new clothes, the new place. Everything just out of the bandbox. But thanks.” She waved her hand shyly. “So what do you think? Great, isn’t it? Safe, secure, all the conveniences. The whole complex is downright twenty-first-century—like a city unto itself. Tonight, for example. Oh.” She stopped. “I figured you’d want to rest tonight, so I didn’t cancel the evening.”

“Fine,” I said.

“Well, tonight . . .” She handed me a small tub of coleslaw and a plastic fork. “Tonight I’ll have a drink, then dancing at the new hotel, maybe a late snack—all without leaving the building. I won’t even muss my hair. It’s just the girls from the office for the drink. Actually, I’m late now. We do it every Friday. Gripes, gab. The girls. You know.”

She glanced over her shoulder, as if for the first time she didn’t want my sister to overhear. “It’s Timmy,” she said, turning back to me, “for the dancing.”

Standing suddenly with her plate, she asked me in a casual voice if she’d told me about him and if her blouse was too revealing without her jacket. It was a red silk blouse, scooped low in the back and scalloped over the bodice, hanging sleek and perfect, like a blouse you see on an actress in a movie but never think of owning. It did not reveal too much.

Timmy, I thought. A grown man. But I said, “Very pretty. Nice. Fine.”

When I said it, she stopped and looked at me severely. Then she laid her plate of ribs back on the table, looked at her watch, and sat down, smoothing her skirt. Slowly, she reached for one of my cigarettes, then stopped and stared at me as if she were about to say something. As I waited for her to say it, I knew she wasn’t going to. I knew Timmy had a room on one of the cheaper floors of the hotel or was exactly like his name, and that it was none of my business.

She sat, staring, long enough for me to understand all that twice. Then she stood up, gathered her keys, and draped her jacket over one arm. “Well,” she said. “I’m already late.”

“Have a good night,” I said.

“You, too.” She opened the front door. “Diana, I’m going, and you’re in by midnight, right?”

Diana raised one foot from her chair by the window.

“Right,” my mother said, looking at me. “Maybe you two girls can have a nice talk.” She said it with grit in her voice, like a dare. Then she closed the door.

I listened after her until I heard the distant ring of the elevator, then looked down at her plate. She hadn’t eaten much. Everyone was getting thin, losing weight.

When I looked up, I saw Diana, leaning around the chair back, watching me. She gave a half-friendly, half-

PARTY PER PALE

Skinny-dipping in the kidney-shaped pool,
sodium lamps lighting the highway
passing by us,
we synchronize our bodies, one stroke,
two, faster, slower,
through the dark, denatured water,
breaststroke, butterfly,
a crawl across the deep into the shallows . . .
as if we were together in amniotic fluid,
born in love,
like the twin calves my father's cow
dropped in the pasture—
the female a freemartin, blond,
the loveliest I'd seen, sterile. . . .

Some nights she comes to me still,
dream-calf, velvet, cream
on her tongue from her mother's udder,
brushing past the beauty-berries
out of the bayou,
the clink of her bell
like ice clicking in glasses
held by the guests
at my parents' parties. Beyond the hedgerows
I watched their shadows thrown
against the windows—an *ombres chinoises*—
as they lifted their highballs
to toast a birthday
or danced the grapevine twist
across the carpet. I believed in marriage then—
that after each party love reconstituted itself,
the lipsticked glasses, the charred panatelas,
a lost earring,
assembling into couples
pairing off in low-slung cars,
tail fins flashing down the driveway.

Come back, my mother says,
anytime, standing in the doorway.
So long, so long, they call,
growing small, smaller,
waving down the driveway. So long
to Rayburn's Rhapsody warming the kitchen,
to sweet milk turning
in a milk-glass pitcher,
so long to the calf the color
of honey. Of milk, curd, butter,
dung, and urine, she gave us only waste
and beauty. My father shipped her
somewhere he wouldn't tell us,
though my brothers played out the scene
over and over,
linking the cars together
on their 00-gauge railroad—
the locomotive, the coal tender, the stock car—
the plastic cattle huddled
behind the lattice, unloaded
at way stations, whistle-stops, crossings,
until they were lost
in a Romeo slipper or cardboard boxes
in the back of a closet. Years later,
rummaging through the attic,
my mother found one
and held it in her palm, hardly remembering
how happiness was composed. *I swan*,
she said, looking across the rafters—
as if astonishment were a bird
heading out over open water,
its wings spread wide, uplifted.

—Susan Prospere

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knowing wave. "Ready for our nice chat?" she said.

"No." I walked over and sat on the windowsill facing her. She grinned at me, looked expectant.

"Go ahead and smile," I said. "But Lord, Diana—*Timmy*."

"Yeah." She slouched into the chair and crossed her ankles next to me on the sill. "He's that bad, too," she said. Then she sat up again. "Listen—first, I am not a teen-age alcoholic, but, second, if you are going to sit there and talk about Timmy, then I deserve a drink." She pulled a pint of something pink out from under the seat cushion. "So do you mind?"

I glanced at the door. "I don't know. No."

"Thanks." She leaned back into the chair, rested the bottle on her chest while she unscrewed the cap, then tipped it to her lips. Her forehead pulled when she drank, made her face serious and intent.

"So you've met him?"

"Sort of." She gasped a little after the drink. "One night we sat here awhile waiting for her to change shoes. He told me he just retired from the Air Force and now he's a travel agent. Then he told me he was thinking of growing a mustache—he'd never had one—and just before she came in he said he'd decided this was going to be Timmy's year."

"Timmy's year. Good God. What did you say?"

"I didn't say anything. He wasn't asking me a question. Anyway, that was it. She had her shoes and they left." Diana tipped the bottle again, this time smiling as she drank.

"What is that?" I said.

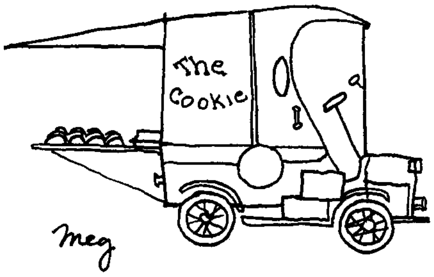
She held it up so I could see the label.

" 'Feeney's Cherry Vodka,' " I read. "That's a ridiculous thing to drink."

"I'm aware," she said, looking past me out the window. I turned to look with her and saw the last of the sun disappear behind the city, but I could tell her attention was on the street, as though she were trying to pick out a particular car.

"There's your sunset," I said.

Her eyes moved once to the sky, then



settled back on the street. In the half-dark of the room, her face was soft, a girl's face, glowing as if she'd just scrubbed it.

"You look pretty in this light," I said, hooking my stocking feet under her seat cushion. "Have you realized yet that you grew up to be pretty?"

She cocked her head at me. "So did you." She nodded behind her to the door. "So did she. How much do you reckon it will save me in ten years?"

"It's only an observation," I said. "Not a prophecy. You really do say 'reckon.' Where did you pick that up?"

She raised the bottle again and shrugged, then looked back at the street.

"Hey," I said, wiggling my foot under the cushion. "Hey, who buys that stuff for you?"

Though she did not blink, she changed when I said it. Her mouth fell open a bit, and she looked up from the street to the night sky. Slowly, pressing the top of the bottle under her chin, she closed her mouth and pulled her lips into a straight, thin line.

"A boy?" I said.

She did not move.

"A man?"

As a child, she could never tell a lie without smiling. A dish would crash in the kitchen and she would follow the sound out to us. "I didn't do it," she would say, almost beaming, her eyes tearing with the effort to pull her face into control. She wasn't smiling now. Her eyes were dry. She put one foot on the floor, then the other foot next to it, looked down as though she were measuring. "It's worse than Timmy," she said.

She capped the bottle, slipped it back under the cushion of the chair, and stood up. "I'm going down to the river for a while," she said. "I've got a ride waiting."

"The river." I stood up with her. "The river is rank, isn't it? Has someone fixed the river?"

She stopped at the hat rack to pull on her boots. "What do you mean? It's a river."

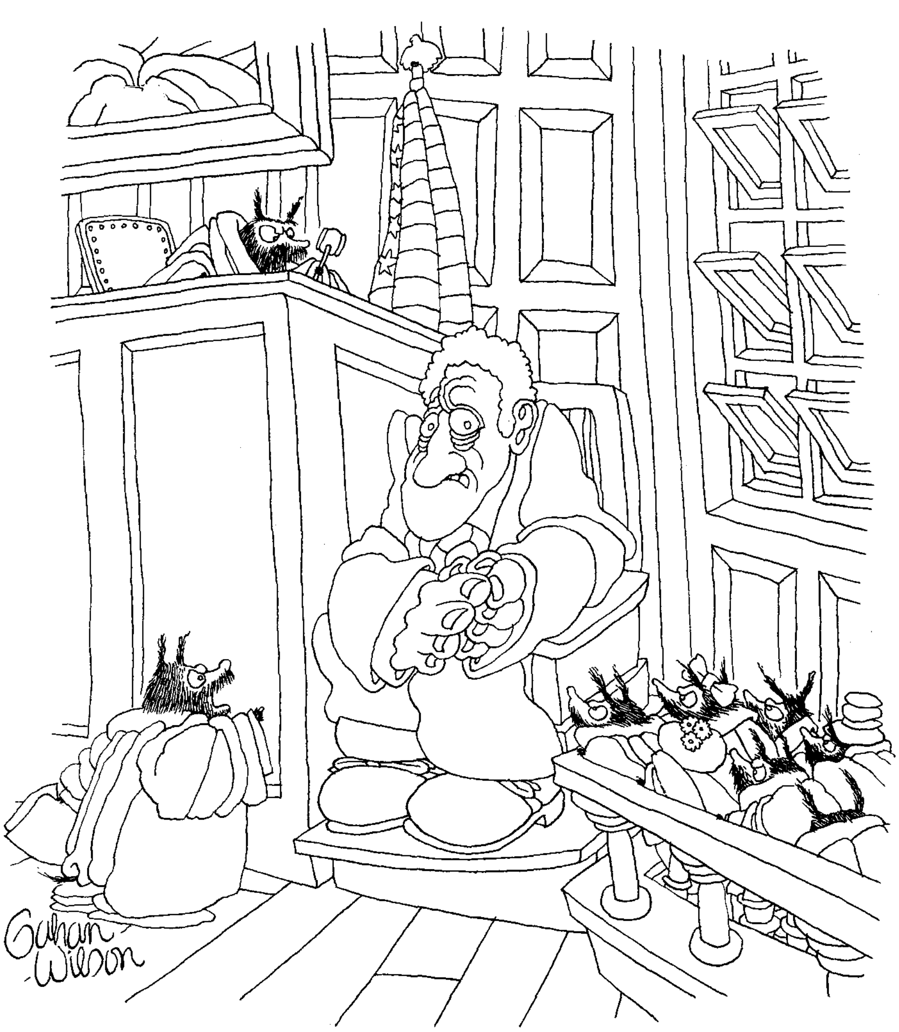
"Well, doesn't it still smell like a chemical plant? Isn't that still the worst part of town?"

"That would be my guess."

"Well, who goes there?"

"I do," she said. "I'll see you."

"Diana." I walked behind her to the door and held it a moment.



"Did you or did you not employ a leash to drag your cairn terrier, Jack, away from the corner of Park Avenue and Sixty-fifth Street in spite of his making every effort to clearly indicate to you that he wished to stay where he was?"

"What?" she said.

"You know, whoever he is—I mean, whatever it is you're doing, you don't have to do it."

"I already did," she said and pulled the door closed.

After she'd left, I sat down in her chair by the window and looked down at the street. I wanted to see her, to note the make of the car, to be a witness, but she wasn't there. I slipped her bottle from under the cushion and held it. Then I unscrewed the top and took a drink. The sweet, thick taste made me wince. It was unimaginable. I recapped the bottle. The clock chimed seven behind me, and I stood up. Except for the gleam of light over the vacant dining table, the room stretched with long shadows, and I saw it again as a strange room, frozen and unfamiliar. I stared a moment at the chairs and tables, at the plates of abandoned food, the stillness so profound it stilled me. Then I put Diana's bottle in my pocket and left.

I DROVE around for hours, making a wide circle past parks we'd played in as children, past the Catholic girls' school we'd both attended. Lingering at crosswalks, I examined the faces illumined by my headlights. Through downtown I drove slowly, idling in front of bars, watching shadows flicker in and out of lighted doorways. Down at the river, I smelled the musty, dank odor that had mystified my mother when she smelled it on Diana. It was the stench of mud, oil, and industry. Nothing much was down there—empty lots, rubbish shifting in the breeze, the blackened shell of a gas station, and, in the distance, the flame and haze of the refinery. I drove back into the city and ended up on Twelfth Street outside the Manhattan Bar, a squat and oddly whimsical dive with a checkerboard façade that sat across from the Y.M.C.A. I'd given up on finding Diana. I was just sitting in my parked car, thinking dully of my father and the years he'd come down to the Y every Sunday after Mass for a steam bath and massage. I was coming to some distant understanding that I'd never have access to the mystery of motive behind his choice to separate the weeks of his adult life that way, with a ritual of prayer, steam, and pummelling, when I heard a woman's laughter, like a tin bell in the dark. Diana was not the one laughing, but the woman who was held the checkerboard door of the Manhattan open and drew Diana inside.

Diana didn't see me come in and take a stool at the bar. She sat, her back to the door, at a table in a far corner. With her was a man, older, my age, filling shot glasses from a bottle of Wild Turkey. He wasn't a dark or deadly-looking man. As he leaned into the light suspended over the table, I saw a tiny ribbon of pale scalp around his ears and at his neck; he'd just had a haircut. Diana was smiling and listening raptly to the woman who owned the laugh—a large woman dressed in a loud orange-and-lime-green sweater. As I watched, the woman stood, held up her glass, and made a toast that convulsed all of them. The man with the haircut roared. Diana put her head down on the table.

"What?" the woman said louder. She smiled slowly. "What? Is that too many?" She knocked on the head of the man next to her. "Come on. Fourteen is too many? Tell me."

I watched her and thought stupidly for a moment, Fourteen what? Then the man sneaked both arms around her waist. He pulled her close, leaning back to watch her face as he ran one hand down the inside of her leg. "One shy of enough," I watched him say.

That's when Diana lifted her head, looked over her shoulder, and saw me. "Get out of here," she said when she came to stand by my stool. I was still watching the woman, who had lowered her glass but remained standing, looking into it.

"Jesus, Diana," I said.

"What?"

I turned to her. She looked the same as she had earlier when she stood at our mother's front door—like the tough girl she was trying to be. She made me angry, and I was glad I had embarrassed her in front of those ridiculous people. "I've been looking for you," I said. I lifted the bottle of cherry vodka from my pocket. "I followed your scent. I even went to the river. You were right. It is still the worst part of town. Or maybe this is." I shook my head at her. "You know, I can't believe I found you."

She put her weight on one hip. "Well, you did."

"I see you're unimpressed. Well, I find it notable. Think about it. I never found the dog when he wandered. I never found the keys when our mother prayed to St. Anthony. I don't even think I believed I'd find you. I was just parked out there."

"That's why you found me, then."

"What?"

She leaned forward and spoke through her teeth: "You weren't really *looking* for me."

I shook my head at her. "Diana, don't be bright. Don't be clever. Get out of here, O.K.? That's the Y.M.C.A. across the street."

"You get out of here." She moved closer to me. "You're the one who thinks she's so bright. In one day you find your way home and you find your little sister."

"O.K." I held up my hands. "I get it. But just tell me how this is a solution."

"I'm not telling you anything. Go on." Suddenly she looked behind me, and her voice dropped. "Get out of here, all right?"

I swivelled around on my stool and saw the bartender, a square, heavy man, staring solemnly at us, his arms crossed over his wide chest, a white towel thrown over one shoulder. I held up Diana's bottle and wiggled it at him, saying, "If you carry this fine brand, I need one for Little Sheba here. And a Scotch for me."

"*Get out.*" Diana slapped the bar hard, and I turned back to her. We both stared a moment; then I swivelled around to the bartender, who put one finger to the end of his thick nose as if she'd been right on target.

I felt Diana lean into my

LAWRENCE OF SUBURBIA

back, her knuckles pressed against my spine. She stayed that way until the bartender turned away from us and moved down the bar. Then on my neck I felt her whisper, clenched and insinuating. "I am not getting thrown out of here for you," she said.

I spun around and grabbed her wrist so hard that she stumbled. "You're sixteen years old." I said it loud, into her face, squeezing her wrist. "You're barely born, sitting over there with people you shouldn't meet in a lifetime."

"Hush, will you? Just please shut up and leave." She touched my hand on her wrist, and I realized how tightly I held her. "You're hurting me," she said.

I let go of her wrist, and she looked away from me, out over the barroom, faintly shaking her head, her breath and eyes moist. "Come on, Diana." I touched her elbow lightly. "Please. Let's go, O.K.?"

She pulled her arm away from me. "Don't touch me again," she said.

"Diana, I am not leaving without you."

"Then stay," she said, pushing away from the bar, pointing at me. "But right where you are. Don't you come near me."

Men pulled their feet out of the aisle as she walked back to the far corner of the bar. The bartender still stared at me, and I understood that he would not bring me a drink. To spite him, I smoked a cigarette and watched Diana's table. No one looked at me, but suddenly the large woman stood and headed for the back. She slid between chairs delicately, her arms held high and away from her hips, as though she were moving through a thicket. When she passed me, I stood up and followed her.

The ladies' room was a tiny cell, tiled in pink and black and noxious with a baffling fruity scent that knocked me against the back wall. The woman stood in front of me, pressed against the basin, examining her hair in the mirror. She glanced at me, then began to spray her hair with some potion she'd removed from a zippered cosmetic bag imprinted with Dalmatians. Around her face, which was duller and flatter than Diana's, the spray made her black hair glisten in the harsh light of the room. She twisted particular strands, pulling them into odd shapes, which she then appraised intently. When she noticed me watching her, she turned around. "Do you want to use the sink?"

"Nice hair," I said.

She looked back at her reflection and lifted her chin. "Well, it's this." She held up the spray bottle. "That, and I only comb it every couple days. That's my real secret." She looked at me. "It keeps it wild."

I nodded. She was younger than I thought when I'd watched her in the bar, and that fact exhausted me. She was only a schoolgirl, probably Diana's age, with a young girl's nervous hands and eyes, flickering and wary. As I watched, she began to spray more and more of the potion, lifting her hair to find the nape of her neck and the fine smooth spot at each temple. The acrid mist and fruity air brought the awful taste of Diana's pink vodka into my throat. I moved to the basin and eased myself up to sit on the counter, facing her.

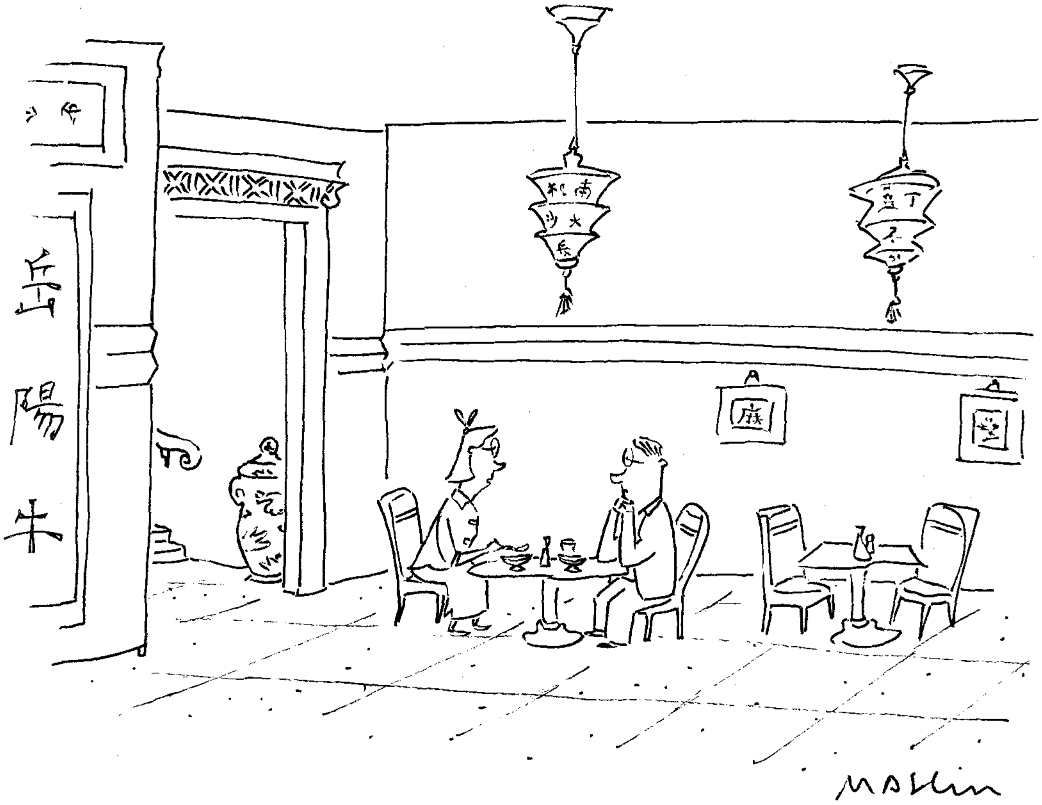
She stopped, her hands in midair. "*What?*"

"No, nothing," I said. "I'm just worn out. Maybe it's this stuff." I slid Diana's bottle from my pocket. "I shouldn't have tasted it." I set the bottle next to me on the counter and looked at her. "Or maybe," I said, "it's those fourteen times you were asking about." She put her bottle of potion down, her eyes steady now, watching me. "That's too many," I said. "It really is."

She stiffened. "You're Diana's sister." She shook her hair one time and looked back at her image in the mirror. "I saw you two out there, darling."

With that last word—she pronounced it "dahlin' "—I heard the drawl and breath of a small town. This is who says "reckon," I thought. "Where are you from?" I asked her. "You're not from here, are you?"

She smiled and zipped her bottle of spray into her little bag. "My folks run that truck stop you sometimes hear about down in the southwest corner of the state. You know, the one that has the New Year's Eve party every year—



"A prawn—Hunan style—for your thoughts."

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free food and drinks and all. It's practically in Arkansas. Anyway, they saw me getting restless and sent me up here to my aunt and the nuns. Afraid I'd hop a rig or something."

"You go to the Catholic school?" I said. "With Diana?"

"Sure. What's the matter? Is fourteen too many for a Catholic girl? Or is that just too many for you?"

"O.K." I raised my hand. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said it."

"No." She picked up her zippered bag, then set it down. "It is too many. I know that." She looked at me and shrugged.

"Listen," I said. "If I could, I'd like to ask you one thing. Is that man out there with you or is he with Diana?"

She gave me a close-lipped smile and shook her head. "I don't think he's decided yet."

"Well, let me say just this. Don't sleep with that man, O.K.? Don't let Diana sleep with that man."

Her smile weakened, and she ran her hands over her little bag, smoothing it, then setting it upright.

"I'm sorry about what I said. Just don't go off with that man, O.K.?"

She shrugged again, then lifted herself up on the counter on the other side of the sink. Blankly, she fiddled with the faucet, turning the water on and off so that the pipes shuddered and shook the counter beneath us. Then she stopped and looked up at me. I watched her.

"So you're Diana's sister."

"Yes," I said.

"She doesn't talk about you much."

"Well."

"I never had a sister. My parents are old. They've always been old. My mom says I'm probably the last good surprise they'll have. My mom is all right, although she used to follow me around just like you're doing with Diana." She smiled suddenly. "She carried a switch, though. Life is tougher downstate."

"That's what I should have brought."

"Listen, the switch was just the opening act. Afterward she'd stand in the doorway of my room and listen to me wail. I'd say how sorry I was and how I was all done with it, and she'd just shake her head at me. She'd really get it going. Then she'd fly at me across the room, get right up in my face." The girl leaned across the basin at me. "Nose to nose," she said, "until I couldn't see anything but her. Then she'd say, 'Hope and regret. Hope and regret, child. You seem to be making a home for yourself exactly in between.' "

I smiled into the girl's face. "That's good," I said.

She waved her hand and leaned back against the mirror. "My mom's all right. She's one old biddy." She quieted when she said it, pressed her hands against her thighs, and then looked at me. "Well, I gotta go," she said. Slowly, she slid off the countertop, then stopped. "You know," she said, "there's a back door at the end of this hall. She won't even have to see you. Wouldn't that be a nice thing to do—to just sort of let her slowly realize you're gone?"

I shook my head at her.

"Well, I tried." She put out her hand. "Nice meeting you anyway."

I took her hand, so small it surprised me. "What's your name?" I asked her.

"Sharon."

"Sharon, she should come home with me."

She let go of my hand. "Should and gonna," she said lightly. "Like my mama says."

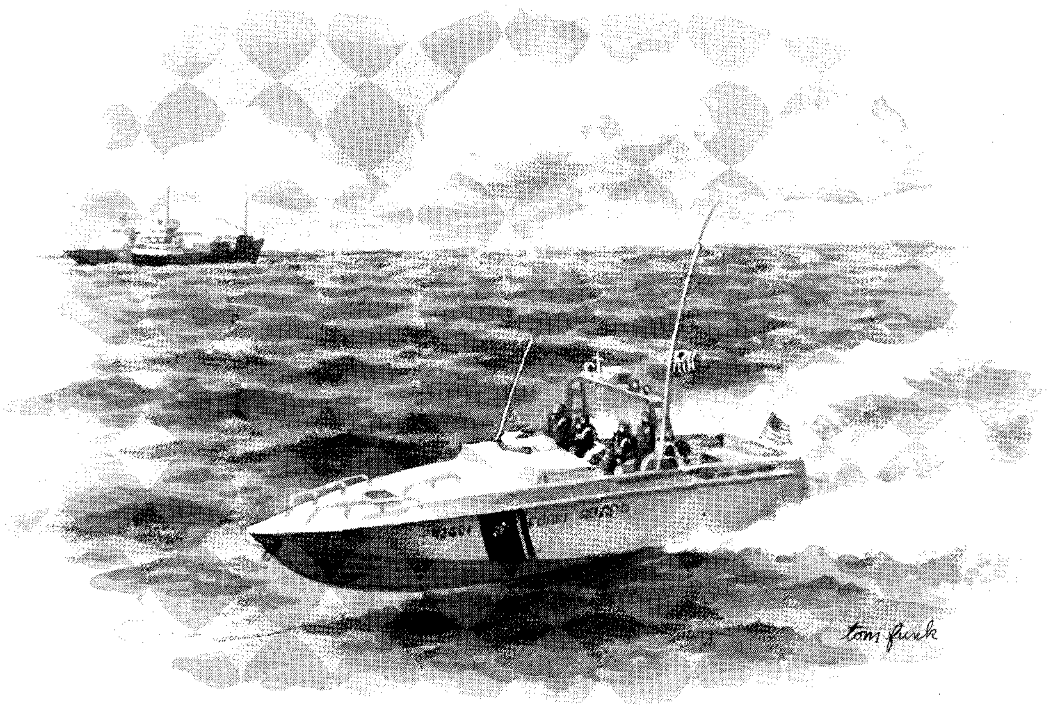
Suddenly the door swung in and Diana stood there, holding it open, her face violently pale in the harsh light. She stared fiercely—first at the girl, then at me. No one said anything. From the darkened hallway behind her, the din of the bar drifted in, and Sharon looked up, slipped past Diana, and was gone. Diana didn't move, one arm stiff to the door, her mouth a tight line. The pay telephone just outside the door began to ring, and I looked past her for a moment, thinking of my mother and Solomon's signal, of those shadowy rooms, the table still laid with picked-over plates, each of us now in these unlikely places. I lifted Diana's bottle from the counter, dropped it quietly in the trash, and looked at her. "Let's go home now, O.K.?" I said. She stood still. Her eyes flickered once when the ringing phone stopped. Then she turned and followed Sharon. The door swung shut behind her.

I DROVE home the long way, cutting down to the river again, then switching back randomly through the city. I passed Kansas City Body Shop, where my father had had our old Rambler serviced by two stiff and silent men who'd been deafened, he told me, by the same North Korean land mine. Farther on, I saw Wonderland, a dingy, forbidden arcade where the city's bad boys had hung out when I was a child, and where once, in a quick surprise, my mother had taken Diana and me. It had been the weekend before New Year's Eve, and we'd shopped all morning for our mother's party dress, pushing through thick crowds, me clutching the back of her coat, Diana clutching the back of mine. She decided finally on a red dress, a lovely dress—off the shoulder, cinched at the waist, and falling into a long circle skirt that, she'd said, standing on tiptoe in the dressing room, would swirl lightly around her ankles when she danced. Afterward, out on the street again, she'd taken our hands suddenly, brightly, and led us into Wonderland, past boys slouched over pinball machines, boys rolling toothpicks in their mouths, to the front of the arcade, where she held her dress box in both hands and waited, smiling, while Diana and I each tried a quick draw with the life-size mechanical outlaw in the window.

When I got to my mother's new building, I pulled into the parking garage and drove to the lowest level, to the spaces reserved for visitors. It was dark down there, hollow with quiet after I shut off the car. I leaned back against the seat and sat still, closing my eyes. Perhaps they were up there, I thought, floors above me, my mother and sister, miraculously home, moving around the apartment in their nightclothes, my mother turning on the dishwasher and drawing the drapes, my sister leaning into the opened refrigerator. I started suddenly and sat up in my seat, fumbling for my keys, one hand already on the door, propelled by the same huge hurry that had moved me mornings as a child whenever I woke to hear the sound of my family already at the breakfast table, their low voices and familiar rustlings drifting lightly up to my room as they began the day without me. —JANET DESAULNIERS

A REPORTER AT LARGE

SEMPER PARATUS



ON the chart, Sandy Hook, the northern end of the New Jersey barrier beach, looks like one of the side bumpers in a pinball machine—a five-mile-long bumper, positioned as if to nudge vessels approaching New York Harbor into the Lower Bay and thence through the Narrows, between Staten Island and Brooklyn, and into the harbor proper. At the bumper's northwestern tip, behind a chain-link fence, is the United States Coast Guard's Station Sandy Hook, to which I came, some months ago, for a week-long visit—part of an extended pilgrimage I had undertaken in order to see today's Coast Guard at work.

I've counted myself a friendly observer of the service for many years, both as a journalist covering the pleasure-boating world and as a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, which consists of thirty-three thousand civilian volunteers who give public courses in boating, check the safety condition of small craft, and assist in search-and-rescue work. Recently, I'd seen evidence that the Coast Guard was undergoing racking changes, whose most obvious cause was the service's chronic underfunding; I'd also heard that there was an internal conflict between "new" and "old" visions of the Coast Guard's function—an identity crisis within an organization that has always made a virtue out of its shortage of resources and the wide variety of its tasks, which include military defense, seagoing law enforcement, lifesaving, safety inspection of commercial vessels, certification of their crews, pollution prevention, and the maintenance of aids to navigation. Safety at sea, which has been the Coast Guard's principal concern since the end of the Second World War, had been deëmphasized, I was told, in favor of military readiness and law enforcement—particularly the interdiction of drug smuggling. I wanted to find out the extent to which this was true, and what effect it was having on the service.

Sandy Hook seemed like a good vantage point from which to observe the traditional Coast Guard. Since Colonial times, the approaches to New York Harbor have teemed with ships and small craft—a condition that in itself means trouble sooner or later. For seagoing vessels, trouble lies immediately below the surface, because the entrance to the harbor, between the Hook and Rockaway, is one big shoal, crisscrossed by relatively narrow channels and marked by lighthouses that resemble each other so closely that they are easy to confuse. The combination of geography, weather, and simple congestion has gone a long way toward making Coast Guard Group Sandy Hook one of the busier search-and-rescue operations in the country: its four component stations—Sandy Hook itself; Shark River, eighteen miles to the south; Manasquan, twelve miles farther down; and Rockaway, ten miles across the harbor on the Long Island shore—respond to about two thousand calls annually.

As Coast Guard installations go, Sandy Hook is on the large side; about a hundred people are stationed here. (Some of them, though, live off the Station and commute from as far away as Long Island.) The main building, housing both Group and Station Sandy Hook, is a vaguely modern brick structure; only the Coast Guard ensign on its flagpole and a sign—"Home of the Rescue Experts"—differentiate its exterior from that of, say, a small surburban junior high school. Inside, too, the design motif is educational-bureaucratic, reinforced by the smell of floor wax and industrial cleaner and by bulletin boards cluttered with announcements, orders, awards, and rosters.

YEAR after year, national statistics show that more than two-thirds of the vessels assisted by the Coast Guard are small pleasure boats in no immediate peril, and the cases during my week-long visit at Sandy Hook merely underlined those figures. There were boats whose engines had quit, boats whose skippers had got lost in the dark, boats that had run out of fuel, boats that had gone aground, abandoned boats that had been torched by their owners (presumably for the insurance).

The first word of most of these

"I have wealth, but I've never felt encumbered by it."

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incidents comes, by telephone or two-way radio, to the Station or Group Duty Office. Normally, each station has considerable autonomy in running routine operations within its assigned geographic area of responsibility, but because Group and Station Sandy Hook are in the same building the Group Duty Office usually finds that instead of just supervising local operations it is in immediate control of them. The office itself is a low-ceilinged chamber about ten feet by twenty; down one long wall runs a counter studded with communications gear of various types—telephones, marine and police radios, a computer, a color TV set, and a closed-circuit monitor that displays the gate at the front of the station and the dock area behind it. At one end of the counter is a raised work surface under which are a number of drawers containing nautical charts and position-plotting tools. The charts most frequently needed for local search-and-rescue work have been encased in clear plastic and hang from the walls.

While the Group's commanding officer is responsible for what goes on in here, actual operations are most often in the hands of the Duty Petty Officer, a quartermaster first class. Most of the time, one or two junior petty officers—clerks and communications specialists—are also present, to answer the radios and telephones and type up the endless stream of situation reports ("sitreps" in Coast Guardese) that form the running account of the day's activities. But it is the Duty P.O. who, for twenty-four hours at a stretch, evaluates calls for help, calculates and then plots the positions of distressed vessels, allocates the Group's resources of people and equipment (and decides when to call for assistance from higher authority), reassures the relatives of overdue mariners, and deals with the local press. Even a single case can require half a dozen boats, a couple of helicopters, and liaison with police and fire departments up or down the coast. In the boating high season, between mid-June and mid-September, when six or seven cases may be unravelling simultaneously, even the best-administered duty office is often on the narrow edge of chaos. And there is also the other side—the long winter nights when absolutely nothing happens, hour after hour, watch after watch.

At the time of my visit, Group Sandy Hook had three Duty P.O.s, one short of the authorized strength. Like all good long-service noncommissioned officers, they were both repositories and transmitters of the kind of lore that never seems to get written down. The morning I arrived on the Station, a little after seven, QM 1 Kevin J. Cassidy was just finishing his watch. A stocky man in his early thirties with a crewcut and a weightlifter's biceps, Cassidy is, perhaps inevitably, known to everyone as Butch. He told me later he was almost the only male member of his large family not to have become a New York City police officer or firefighter, and years of service in New Jersey have taken only a little edge off his Long Island accent. The previous night had been uneventful, and Cassidy had spent most of it reading—translations of Sun Tzu and Frederick the Great, on the art of war. Military history, it turned out, was an enthusiasm of Cassidy's. He reminded me a little of the gruffly paternal noncoms of my Army days, and he was fully aware of the new wind blowing through the service. "A lot of it's the bearing," he remarked and then, seeing my bewilderment, amplified: "The *military* bearing."

It was true. The Coast Guard of a decade before—in its appearance, anyway—had all too often deserved its nickname the Hooligan Navy. The young men and women around the hallways at Sandy Hook were certainly a lot neater-looking than their predecessors: uniforms were cleaner and better fitting, haircuts shorter. And one other change, as far as the men were concerned, was no beards. The Coast Guard I'd known was heavily bearded—in many cases as a prideful contrast to the Navy, where beards were forbidden. Some of the beards had been magnificent, but some others, given a desperate shortage of follicles on young faces, had been weedy in the extreme. Now there were virtually none of either sort, and I asked Cassidy why. The change, it seemed, had followed an early dictum of the present commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Paul A. Yost, Jr., who took over in mid-1986: mustaches would still be allowed, but only those men with skin conditions that prevented shaving could keep beards. I gathered from Cassidy that the commandant's order had caused considerable consternation in the ranks.

The order also emphasized a fact that many Americans seem unaware of:

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THE NEW ENGLAND PRESENTS CRAFTS THAT MIGHT HAVE GONE UNNOTICED 150 YEARS AGO.

An American Sampler

At the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut
June 14 – Sept. 3, 1989

At the New-York Historical Society, New York, New York
Oct. 3, 1989 – Jan. 7, 1990

At the Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts
April 15 – Aug. 5, 1990

Folk art wasn't created for museum display. In homes and atop barns and businesses, these pieces played functional, decorative roles in daily American life.

Today, interest in folk art is soaring. Credit in large part is due to Electra Havemeyer Webb, a visionary collector who founded Vermont's Shelburne Museum.

To celebrate America's artistic heritage, some of the nation's leading museums are hosting a special exhibition, *An American Sampler: Folk Art from the Shelburne Museum.*

The New England is proud to sponsor this exhibition because our corporate values so closely parallel those of the classic American craftspeople and their commitment to quality and integrity.

The New England®
Your Financial Partner

A Few Words About Blending For The First Time Scotch Drinker.

Smooth. Mellow. Sweet. Smoky. Refined. In Ballantine's Finest, we blend forty-two superior single malt Scotch whiskies to give you true Scotch flavor. You can't ask for more than that.

Ballantine's®

THE TRUE TASTE OF SCOTCH.

Ballantine's
FINEST
BLENDED
SCOTCH WHISKY

Ballantine's Blended Scotch Whisky 43% Alc./Vol. (86 proof). © 1989 Maidstone Wine & Spirits Inc., Los Angeles, CA.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT BLENDING FOR THE FREQUENT SCOTCH DRINKER.

For nearly a hundred years, Ballantine's Finest has been blended in exactly the same way. That's a long time to avoid change, but someone's got to uphold tradition.

From the 90-odd single malt whiskies made in Scotland (and there are some odd ones), we choose 42 of the very best. Then we create a full-flavored blend that satisfies the true Scotch drinker.

With every sip of Ballantine's Finest, you can taste the crisp, smoky bouquet of the Highlands, the rich, peaty body of the Islands and the lingering softness of the Lowlands. It is a complex and harmonious union which has made Ballantine's the most popular Scotch in Europe. A true measure of the quality and consistency of the blend.

If you want more than that, keep reading.

Ballantine's®
THE TRUE TASTE OF SCOTCH.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT BLENDING FOR THE SCOTCH CONNOISSEUR.

Even when it comes to their favorite dram, it is rare to find Scotch drinkers familiar with the art of blending. Since we blend a fair amount of Scotch, we've taken it upon ourselves to clear up the confusion.

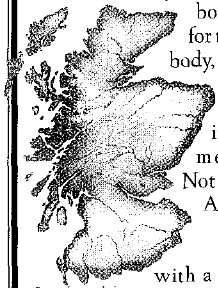
Mr. J. Goudy, master blender. The exact recipe of Ballantine's is a closely guarded secret.

At this point, consider pouring yourself a glass of Ballantine's Finest and settling into your favorite chair. Not only will you be more comfortable, it will also increase your appreciation of what you are about to read. If you like ice with your Scotch, let it melt a bit.

The traditional copper pot still. An invention which has not been improved by progress.

Okay. Take a sip. Hold the liquid amber on your tongue and let the many flavors settle into your palate.

It has been said that a fine Scotch blend should be a melding of four central whisky themes. One for bouquet, another for taste, a third for body, and the last for its ability to blend all four into a balanced, mellow flavor. Not a simple task. And, of course, it cannot be accomplished with a blend of only four whiskies. Twenty or thirty is more typical.



Scotland has a whisky distillery for every 57,000 residents. A world record.

Then there is Ballantine's Finest. A full-flavored blend composed of forty-two of the finest single malt Scotch whiskies. Each included for a specific reason. The famed Highland single malts contribute smooth, smoky, elegant qualities. The brawny Islay malts are deep and peaty, with hints of sea air. From the remote Campbeltown peninsula we treasure the salty, tangy aromas. From the Lowlands, the softness and sweetness. And the tributaries of the River Livet provide complexity and sophistication.

Please write. We welcome all letters.

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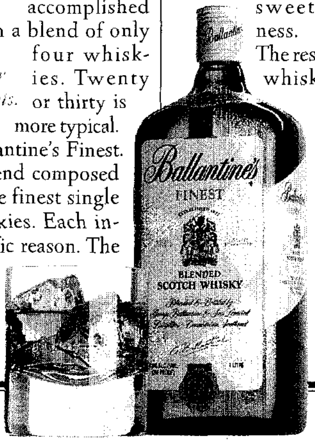

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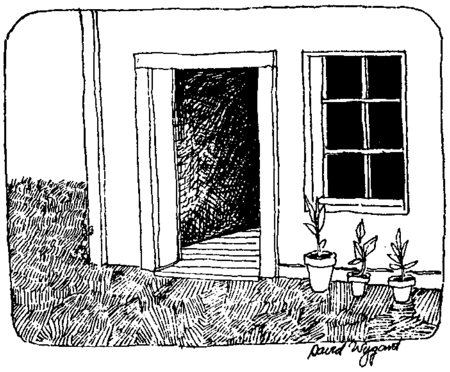
the Coast Guard is first and sometimes foremost a military force—the nation's smallest. By comparison with the nation's other armed services, it is minuscule—about thirty-seven thousand men and women, not counting seven hundred undergraduates at the Coast Guard Academy, in New London, Connecticut, some twelve or thirteen thousand part-time Reservists, and five thousand civilian employees. The Navy, by comparison, has nearly six hundred thousand active-duty people in uniform, and even the Marine Corps, often mistakenly thought of as the nation's smallest military service, has nearly two hundred thousand regular personnel. (Scale is, however, partly a matter of perspective: in terms of ships and boats the Coast Guard is the proprietor of the world's twelfth-largest military fleet.) As one result of its small size, the Coast Guard is often simply forgotten when the American military are being counted; recent news stories dealing at length with the role of women in the armed forces made no mention of the Coast Guard, although the Coast Guard has been recruiting women since the Second World War; Coast Guard women, unlike their Navy counterparts, are eligible to command armed vessels and, in the current anti-drug war, do so regularly.

One factor in the Coast Guard's military invisibility is that in peacetime the service is outside the jurisdiction of the Defense Department, having functioned for most of its history as part of the Treasury. (During wartime, or at the President's behest, the Coast Guard reports directly to the Secretary of the Navy.) In 1967, the Coast Guard found itself plucked out of Treasury and tossed into the newly formed Transportation Department, along with the Federal Aviation Agency, the Bureau of Public Roads, the National Traffic Safety Bureau, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, the new Federal Railroad and Federal Highway Administrations, and the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. One staff member of the House of Representatives who was familiar with the circumstances of Transportation's birth told me that the reason the Coast Guard was included was bureaucratic necessity: "Those other little agencies just didn't have enough bodies to make up a Cabinet-level organization. With thirty-five thousand people, the Coast Guard gave Transportation some heft."

Whatever the Coast Guard's parent department, its oldest function may be battling smugglers. Indeed, the service's official birth date, August 4, 1790, memorializes the day President George Washington signed a bill authorizing the construction, for the Treasury Department, of ten armed sailing vessels whose job was to hunt down an armada of smugglers who had developed their skills before the Revolutionary War, when evading British customs was patriotic as well as profitable. The United States had no other seagoing armed force at the time, for the Navy had been discontinued in 1785 and was not to be reconstituted until 1798. (The Coast Guard thus often calls itself the nation's oldest seaborne military service, or, when it is being precise, "the nation's oldest *continuous* seagoing service.") The Treasury's little fleet, composed at first of coastal schooners, the largest fifty feet long, became known as the Revenue Cutter Service, and larger Coast Guard vessels, regardless of rig or means of propulsion, are still called cutters. In 1915, the Revenue Cutters merged with the Lifesaving Service, and the combined organization took the name Coast Guard.

During the Second World War, the Coast Guard was a fully combatant element of the Navy, but in the next four decades it cultivated a public image that emphasized lifesaving activities over its other functions. Until a couple of years ago, it would have been safe to say that in the eyes of most Americans—and of most Coasties—the service's first function was search and rescue on the water.

BOATS are a central fact of life at most Coast Guard stations, of course, and Sandy Hook has a varied assortment, tied up in slips in the pier area, behind the headquarters building. The largest vessel usually visible is an eighty-two-foot patrol boat, the Point Francis, which, with her ten-man crew, is used mostly for offshore work, and so is often absent for three or four days at a time, on deep-sea search-and-rescue or law-enforcement patrol. Lesser craft include a steel-hulled forty-four-foot motor lifeboat; a pair of forty-one-foot aluminum-hulled utility boats, the most nearly ubiquitous of all Coast Guard small craft; an open skiff, used in the very shallow waters between the Hook and the Jersey mainland; and a nineteen-foot, outboard-powered vessel that combines the inflatable sides of a rubber raft with the stepped fibreglass bottom of a racing powerboat and is known as a Rigid-Hull Inflatable, or R.H.I. This is a light, fast, reasonably seaworthy craft, able to nuzzle up to piers, buoys, and other boats without damaging them or itself, and, as a result, it has become the service's small boat of choice in more and more situations.



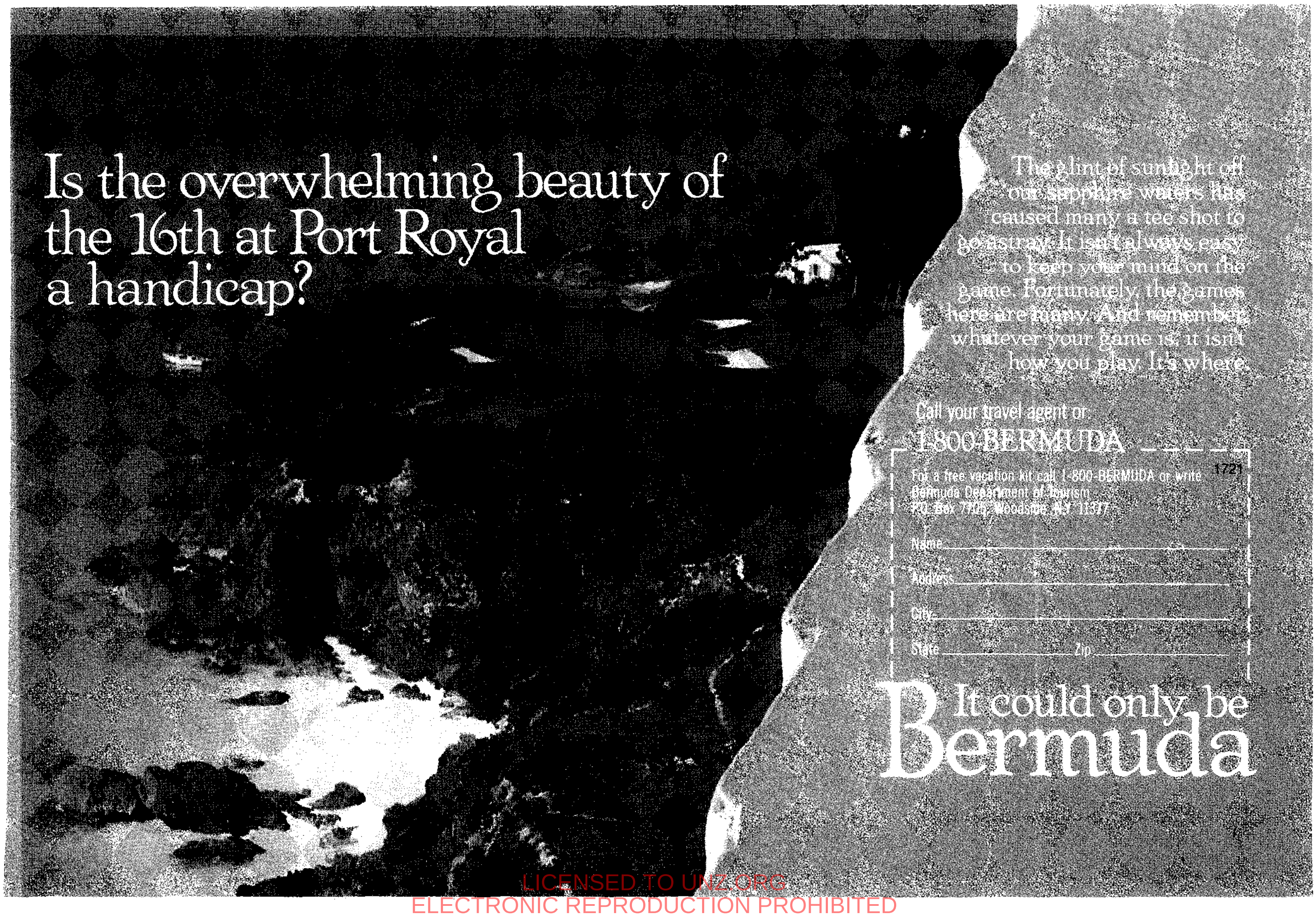
Although the Duty P.O. at Sandy Hook has these vessels available—or most of them (one or more is likely to be out of service)—his first responsibility upon receiving a call for assistance is deciding whether the situation is serious enough to require the Coast Guard's presence or should be referred to a private towing company. Until about seven years ago, the question did not arise: if a mariner requested Coast Guard help and the service had an available unit, out it went. Where a locally based private towing firm existed at all, it was likely to operate a salvage vessel whose equipment was scaled to large ships, and a couple of hours of its time would have cost more than the average small boat was worth. So the Coast Guard, assisted by its Auxiliary, the local marine police, and good Samaritans in passing vessels, answered any call, urgent or frivolous. Its assistance was free (except, of course, to the taxpayer), and by the beginning of the nineteen-eighties the service was logging over seventy thousand cases a year, three-quarters of them pleasure boats.

To save taxpayers' money, and in line with the Reagan Administration's philosophy of encouraging the private sector to take over the functions of government agencies, Congress in 1982 passed legislation that directed the commandant of the Coast Guard to "review Coast Guard policies and procedures for towing and salvage of disabled vessels in order to further minimize the possibility of Coast Guard competition or interference with private towing activities or other commercial enterprise." The commandant, Admiral Thomas Gracey, announced shortly afterward that in situations where no threat to life or property existed the Coast Guard would now refer cases directly to towing services. And, to tilt the board even more toward the private firms, the commandant ruled that the Coast Guard Auxiliary, which had been carrying nearly twenty per cent of the assistance workload, would be bound by the same rules as the Coast Guard itself.

The kicker, of course, was, and remains, the question of what constitutes a "threat to life and property." Reliable statistics accumulated over many years indicate that eighty-five per cent of all incidents requiring assistance occur when weather and sea conditions are undemanding, and that over eighty per cent take place less than three miles from shore. Anyone who has been involved in search-and-rescue work knows that many people in difficulty—especially neophytes in difficulty afloat—are convinced that they are in danger when they are not. On the other hand, some people facing such a crisis are so ignorant, or have become so disoriented by cold and fatigue, that they could fail to recognize the prospect of eternity when it was right alongside; and, to complicate decision-making even further, conditions on the water change so fast that what is merely inconvenience at one moment can quickly become genuine peril the next. Deciding what the conditions actually are can be tricky enough for a knowledgeable person who is on the scene, but the Duty P.O. must make up his mind on the basis of fragmentary data, often erroneous or transmitted incoherently over a bargain-basement radio. To aid him he has training, experience, and a set of printed guidelines that, if they are carefully followed, should insure that a boat denied Coast Guard assistance is in no danger, at least for the time being.

The new policy's impact on the pleasure-boat community was predictable. Horror stories about mariners being refused Coast Guard help began to speckle the boating press, followed quickly by stories alleging irresponsible, incompetent, or even piratical behavior on the part of towboat operators with clients at their mercy. Few yachtsmen could make much of a case for the federal government's operating a free towing service for them, but the position of the Coast Guard Auxiliary was far less clear-cut, and it is here that the real controversy has taken place: a fight lining up towboat operators and bureaucrats of the Department of Transportation on one side, yachtsmen and the Coast Guard Auxiliary on the other, and the Coast Guard in the middle.

Like other volunteer organizations, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has had difficulty retaining members in recent years, and the present membership is down from a 1976 high-water mark of just under forty thousand. Members of the Auxiliary, who must be United States citizens (male or female) over the age of seventeen, operate their own boats (a few operate planes) to assist the Coast Guard in safety patrols and in search-and-rescue operations. When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Auxiliarists are working with the Coast Guard, they usually receive what are called orders but are in fact authorizations; an Auxiliarist is reimbursed for fuel used on patrol and has his boat insured by the government in case of accident.

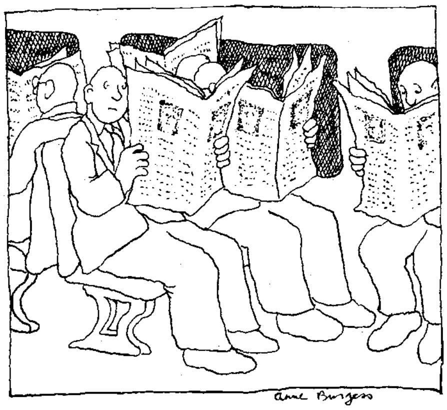
In a sense, therefore, the Auxiliarist under orders is subsidized and can be seen, especially by towboat operators, as competing unfairly with the kind of private enterprise the Reagan Administration wanted to encourage. The Auxiliarist, on the other hand, considers himself essentially a volunteer, whose out-of-pocket expenditures are only partly underwritten. And when the matter arose Auxiliarists were quick to ask, "Isn't Reagan advocating this kind of volunteerism?" To be informed that the most exciting and satisfying portion of their waterborne activity was to be turned over to commercial towboat operators incensed most Auxiliarists, and their anger was stoked by other boat owners, who were not eager to find themselves paying anywhere from eighty to a hundred and twenty-five dollars an hour for services they had formerly got for the asking.

In a short time, the existing handful of small-craft towboats metamorphosed into a self-described industry of approximately a thousand firms, complete with a national association and a Washington lobbyist. Within the Auxiliary, however, the result of Admiral Gracey's policy decision was nearly open revolt and a fifty-per-cent decline in operational activity by its members. By the end of 1987, vocal pressure from the boating public (especially Auxiliarists) attracted the attention of Congress and caused the Coast Guard to reëxamine its towing policy. The new commandant, Admiral Yost, prepared a revised policy, which would, in effect, unleash the Auxiliary. But before the policy could be issued the upper echelons of the Department of Transportation emasculated it, so that what emerged from Coast Guard Headquarters, in June of 1988, was a murky seven-paragraph "refinement" of the non-emergency towing policy which did nothing except blur the existing rules of engagement with some new bureaucratic language. ("Private towboat," for example, was transmuted into "commercial provider.")

Then, in August of last year, Congress stepped in. The Coast Guard's annual funding bill stated that "non-emergency assistance operations by regular Coast Guard units should continue to be conducted in a manner that minimizes competition with private towing and salvage operations," but added that "the Coast Guard Auxiliary should not be considered a part of the Coast Guard" in this context. The bill further directed the Coast Guard "to utilize all qualified resources to render non-emergency assistance to individuals on the water."

Though the debilitating seven-year argument might seem to be over, representatives of the pleasure-boat community say that nothing will change until a clear statement is issued by the Department of Transportation, which has made no move to issue one. In the meantime, the Auxiliary remains only partly mollified; boat owners, many of whom cannot keep up with the Coast Guard's policy changes, feel that the service has left them out on a limb; and towboat operators, all of whom are now required to be licensed, feel themselves threatened with extinction by the same government that called them into existence.

THE Coast Guard usually finds that the search part of the search-and-rescue operation is the more demanding, since most difficult cases involve working from data that are fragmentary or just plain wrong, or both. Accordingly, the Coast Guard trains its search-and-rescue specialists as investigative interviewers besides teaching them navigational extrapolation and management of the people, vessels, and aircraft that may be employed in a search. The principal institution for this kind of training is the National Search and Rescue School, located until recently on Governors Island, just off Manhattan's southern tip, and now transplanted to Yorktown, Virginia, near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay.



The SAR school was established in 1966, with a single, basic course taught by a staff of Coast Guard and Air Force officers, and has expanded and specialized its curriculum until today one may take courses in, among other things, inland, coastal, or deep-water search and rescue, search planning with and without computer assistance, and how to run a SAR operation as on-scene commander. The courses almost invariably emphasize the intellectual side of the activity—the search—since the faculty members feel that the level of seamanship necessary to make the physical rescue is an integral part of the Coast Guard's regular training. In the twenty-three years of the school's existence, more than ten thousand men and women have successfully completed its courses. About sixty-eight hundred of the students have been Coast Guard regulars, Reservists, or Auxiliarists. Eighteen hundred others have come from the Air Force, the Civil Air Patrol, the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Army, and more than six hundred have been American civilians working in the search-and-rescue field. Over the years, the school's reputation has spread around the world, and its foreign graduates now number nine hundred and sixteen, from over eighty nations.

When I visited Governors Island, the school's director, a stocky, energetic commander named Edmund F. Labuda, Jr., explained to me that although the courses are necessarily given in classroom settings, his staff attempts to liven matters up with exercises drawn from actual cases, in which small groups of students are given a basic situation and let loose to solve it, working by what he referred to as the consensus method. I sat in on one such exercise, given near the end of a two-week Coastal Search and Rescue course. The instructor, a wiry, bespectacled, wryly humorous lieutenant named William Mathus, laid out to two groups of students the bare bones of a case that involved a small boat with a crew of two fishermen which was missing on the west coast of Florida. After each student group developed its own solution—neither entirely successful—Mathus read the final situation report from the 1972 case on which the exercise was based: It was an early-morning fishing trip undertaken by two middle-aged Floridians and their wives, who told friends ashore where they were going and then went someplace else; whose boat sprang a leak, filled, and capsized; who watched, clinging to the nearly sunken hull, as Coast Guard boats and aircraft searched fruitlessly, just out of range, because they were working doggedly on the wrong assumption that a seaworthy small boat could not possibly capsize in such calm weather. One victim, after drinking salt water, tried to swim to shore and disappeared; a day or so later, his wife vanished in the darkness; the other wife strangled when she became tangled in the line that connected her life jacket to her husband's. After nearly six days, the sole remaining survivor was spotted, accidentally, by a Coast Guard helicopter on its way to the official search area. By the time Mathus had finished reading the report, the classroom was utterly silent.

The overdue case that descends into tragedy is rare, and so is the extended case that runs its course uninterrupted. Even in the off season, it is not uncommon to have a variety of incidents—overdue boats, disabled craft, fires—going at once. Thursday, October 8th, turned into that kind of day at Sandy Hook. It began slowly, and offstage, to boot. Early in the afternoon, the Andrea Beth, a forty-six-foot sportfisherman making the hundred-and-eighty-mile ocean passage from Falmouth, Massachusetts, to Atlantic City, New Jersey, began to lose power to her radios and electronic navigational gear. Her owner-skipper, one of two people aboard, observed a drop in the battery voltage, which suggested a broken alternator. If that was the trouble, the boat could keep moving only as long as the batteries held out. Then everything would quit, and she would be dead in the water, in seas that the skipper estimated at between six and eight feet, pushed by winds of twenty-four knots from the southwest—blowing, that is, more or less from her destination. At two-fifteen, before low voltage shut down his electronic instruments, the Andrea Beth's skipper got from them a position fix that put him about thirty-five nautical miles south of Long Island's Shinnecock Inlet, a little more than halfway along his projected course. At 4:35 P.M., still under way but increasingly concerned, he raised Coast Guard Station Fire Island on the radio; he informed it of his problem,

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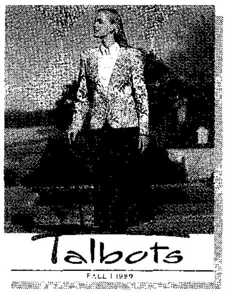

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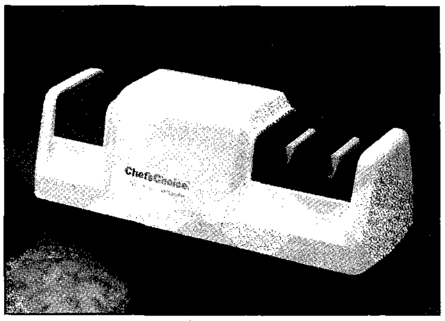

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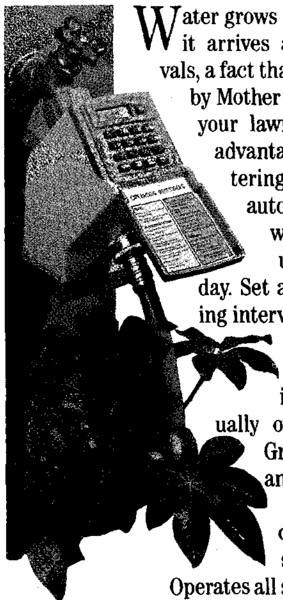

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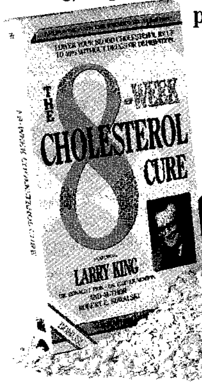

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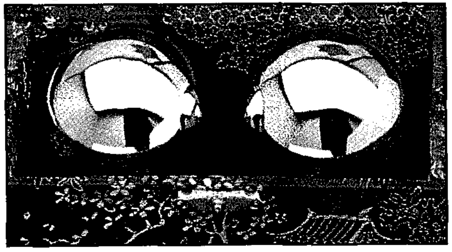

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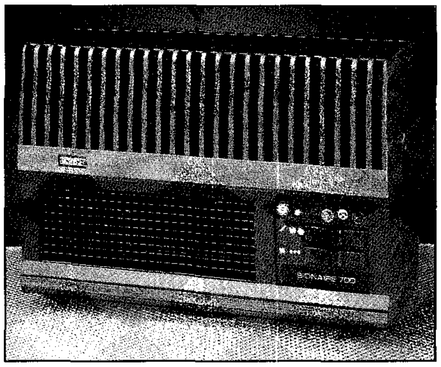

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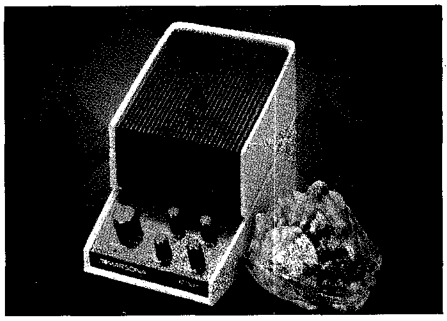

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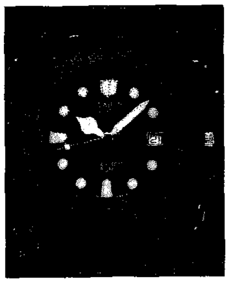

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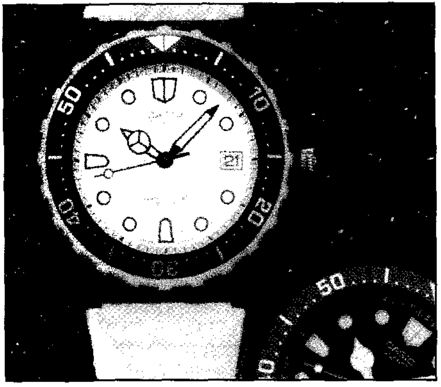

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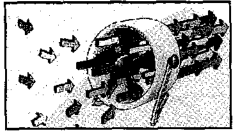

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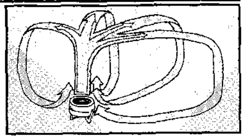

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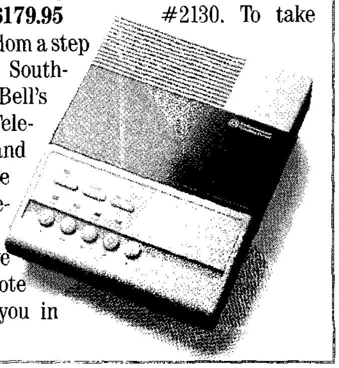

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gave it a position extrapolated from his fix two and a half hours earlier, and told it he intended to hold his southwesterly course and his speed of eleven knots.

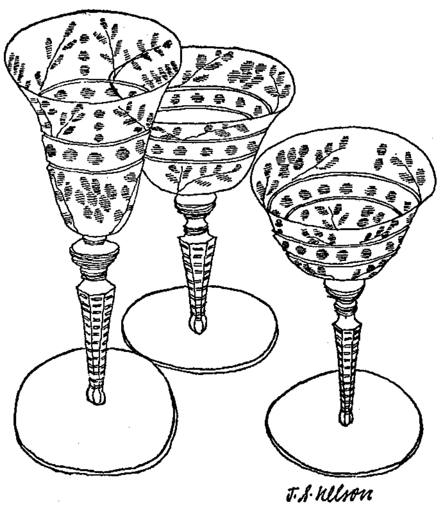
Fire Island alerted its supervising group, at Moriches Inlet, which is responsible for several stations along the barrier beach of Long Island. Since the sportfisherman would presumably soon enter Group Sandy Hook's area of responsibility, the duty officer at Moriches had already alerted his opposite number at the Hook, QM 1 Robert Laahs, who was handling that night's watch. Laahs, a ten-year veteran of the service, is a big man, well over six feet, with a ruddy complexion, blond hair, and a blond mustache. On this particular evening, his natural tendency to prowl the office, from chart table to telephone to radio and back again, was hindered by a cast on his left ankle and foot, the souvenir of an off-duty accident. His first action on receiving the call from Moriches was to pull out a blank form headed "CHRONOLOGICAL SAR LOG," mark down the time, and enter all the details he had of the case. From that moment on, every action, every scrap of information would be scribbled on this sheet and successive sheets, until the case was closed or indefinitely suspended.

At seven minutes past six, the Andrea Beth's dead-reckoning position, advanced from her last known position along the course that Station Fire Island had given her, indicated that she had moved into Group Sandy Hook's area, and operational control of the case—still a watching brief—was passed to Petty Officer Laahs. At that point, the Andrea Beth's calculated position, with darkness coming on, suggested that once her engines quit she might be expected to drift northward, helpless and without lights, into the heavy traffic of the New York Harbor approaches.

It was clearly time to go into a higher gear. Laahs' first call was to First District Headquarters, in Boston, to bring the Rescue Coordination Center up to date and to request that Coast Guard Air Station Brooklyn, at Floyd Bennett Field, put up a helicopter to track the missing boat. The Coast Guard has long favored aircraft for searching, because of the speed with which they can get to an area and cover it effectively. For a long-range search, the service employs fixed-wing machines—either the veteran HC-130 Hercules, a four-engine, propeller-driven airplane with a search radius of fourteen hundred miles, or the newer HU-25A Falcon, a twin-engine fan-jet that has less endurance but can arrive at the search scene far more quickly. For a coastal search, helicopters are preferred, because speed of arrival is not so critical a factor, and a helicopter can fly over-the-water search patterns at very low altitudes and low speeds, and is also able to pluck survivors from the water or from a sinking vessel.

Air Station Brooklyn had received five of the Coast Guard's new helicopter, the HH-65A Dolphin, and was supposed to have four of them in service, with the fifth being used for cannibalizing parts. But now when Laahs called he was informed that its only available duty machine was grounded because of mechanical problems. Instead of waiting the estimated two hours required for a repair, First District decided to launch a Falcon from Air Station Cape Cod, to retrace the Andrea Beth's presumed course.

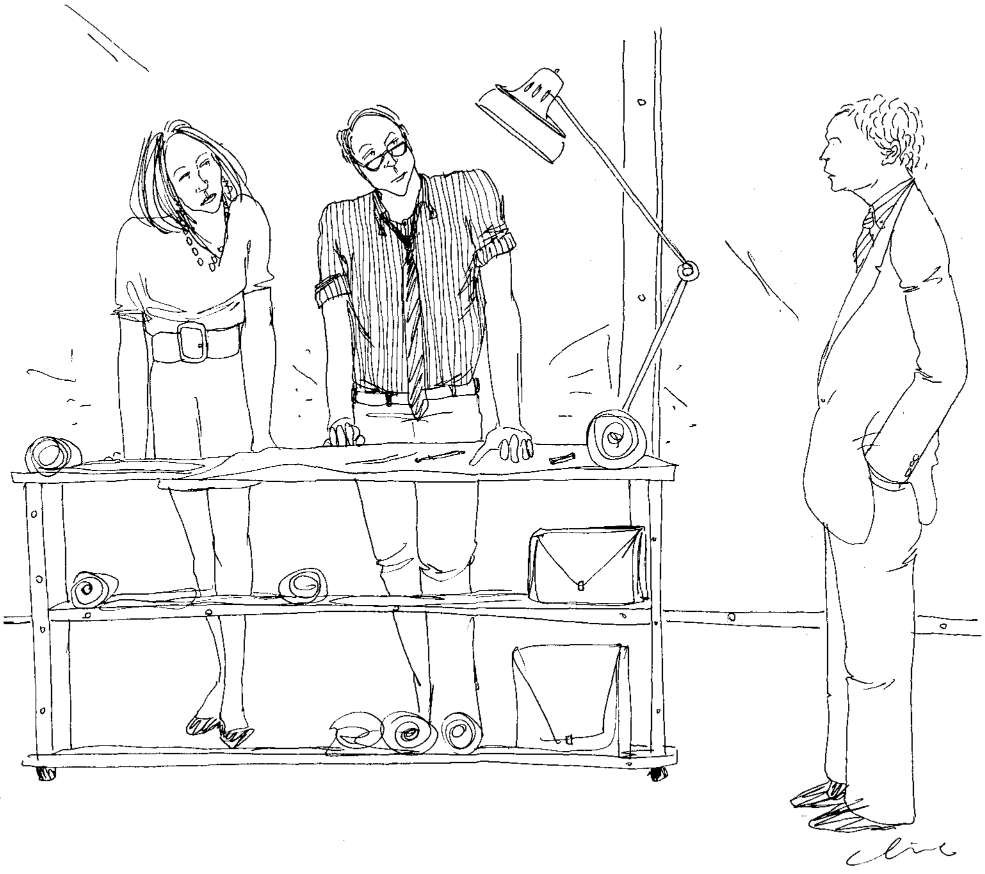
At just about the same time—it was now 7 P.M.—Laahs received word from the Rescue Coordination Center in Boston that the seventy-eight-foot steel fishing vessel Cin Mar II, out of Hampton, Virginia, had broken her propeller shaft and was disabled about forty-five miles off the Jersey coast, where the winds were reported as being between fifteen and twenty-five knots from the west-northwest, with seas from four to six feet. The Cin Mar II, like many craft of her type, normally processes her catch at sea, and so had a crew of eleven; she also had nine thousand pounds of frozen scallops in her hold. She did not have a high-seas transmitter, however, and could not establish radio contact with the shore. Another fishing vessel, the Carolina Baby, which had both short- and long-range radio equipment, was standing by in the vicinity and relaying messages to the Coast Guard base at Cape May, New Jersey. It was obvious that the Cin Mar II would have to be towed in, but she had a draft of nearly thirteen feet, which limited the coastal inlets she could safely enter, and she displaced over a hundred and fifty tons, and that meant that a sizable vessel would be required to pull her.



Ten minutes after Laahs took the call about the disabled scalloper, Boston was on the phone again, with more bad news: Air Station Cape Cod did not have a Falcon available, so it would be necessary to go south, to Cape May, and launch an aircraft from there. Cape May, it turned out, had a helicopter it could put up, and Laahs gave its crew the approximate—by now very approximate—position of the Andrea Beth and her presumed course. That done, he turned his attention back to the Cin Mar II's difficulty. The most suitable towing vessel available was the cutter Point Herron, based at Fire Island. The Point Herron is one of approximately fifty survivors of a class of eighty-two-foot vessels built in the nineteen-sixties. The eighty-two-footers are well suited to towing and communications work, but they and their larger sisters, of the ninety-five-foot Cape Class, are renowned for violent pitching, rolling, and corkscrewing in a seaway—characteristics that wear out their crews and thus make the boats impractical for extended heavy-weather service.

At seven-forty-five, Laahs briefed the commanding officer of the Point Herron, and was advised that she would be under way inside an hour. About half an hour later, with the Point Herron about to leave her pier, Laahs managed to get in touch, via high-seas radio, with the Carolina Baby, still relaying traffic from the Cin Mar II. As is frequently the case with after-dark transmissions in the Medium Frequency band, reception was very poor, and Laahs decided to leave direct contact to Cape May, which was now able to reach the Carolina Baby on Very High Frequency-FM radio.

At half past eight, the helicopter from Cape May lifted off to search for the Andrea Beth, which by then had not been heard from for four hours. If her engines were still running, she was presumably forty-odd miles farther along her course toward Manasquan Inlet, but any number of things might have happened in the meantime to divert her from that heading: wind and sea might have pushed her off course; the helmsman might have been steering erratically (it is a rare helmsman who can hold a small boat within five degrees of its chosen heading); the skipper might have panicked and changed destinations. Without communications, there was no way of knowing, but the business of search and rescue is based on probabilities, so the helicopter was to fly what is known as a track-line search pattern, starting at Manasquan Inlet, ninety-five miles north of Cape May, and following a course that was reciprocal to the one the Andrea Beth should have been following. There was no opportunity for the helicopter to search a wider zone, because its effective flying time once it had reached the entrance to Manasquan Inlet would be about an hour.



"Did I leave any ideas in here?"

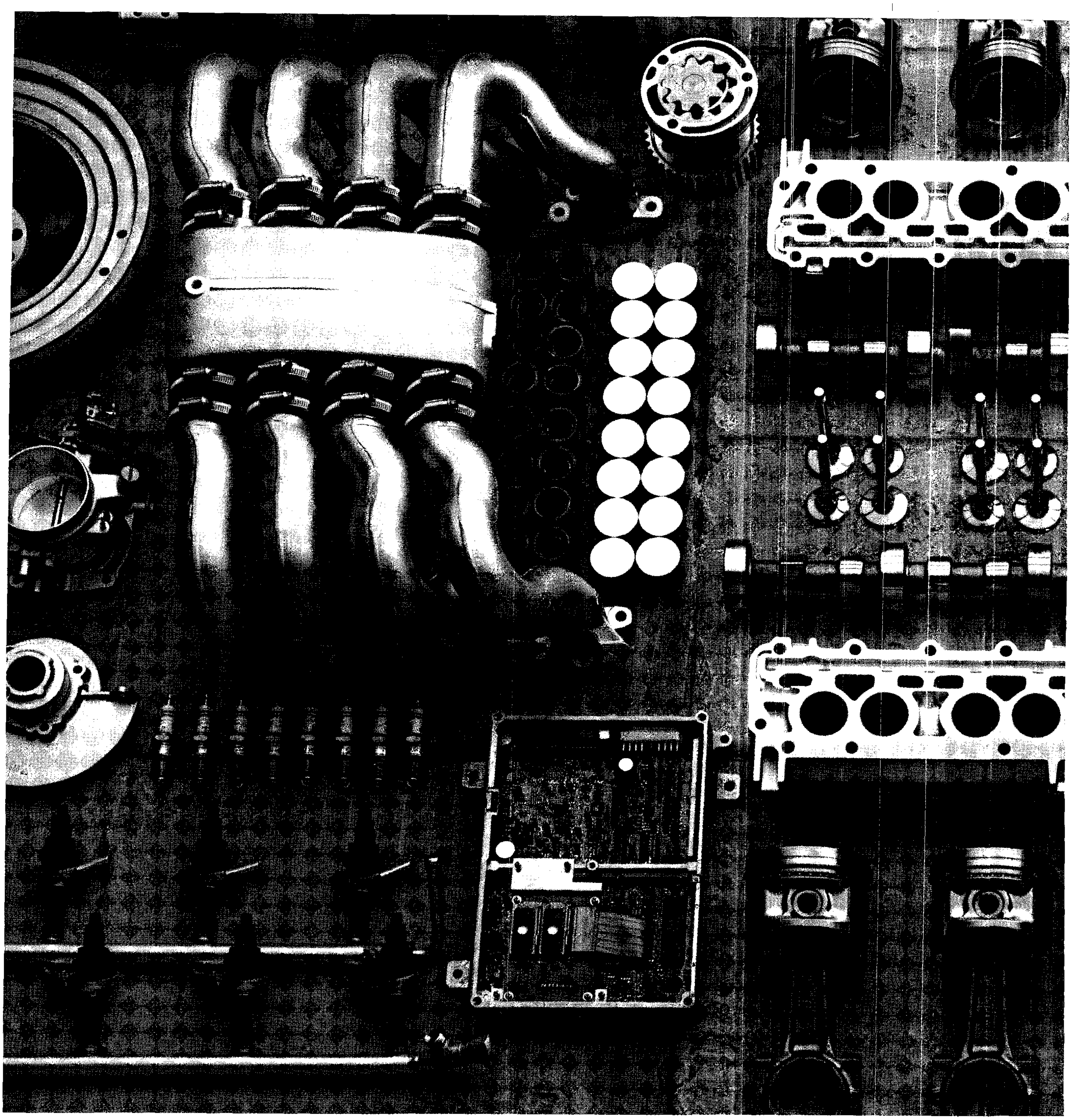
• •

Shortly after nine-thirty, the helicopter searching for the Andrea Beth reported that it had finished its pattern, with no results, and was returning to shore—to Atlantic City—to refuel. It appeared to Petty Officer Laahs that some sort of intermission might ensue, but moments later Sandy Hook received an urgent radio message from the outward-bound Queen Elizabeth 2, reporting the possibility of a man overboard. A despondent cabin steward who had been drinking heavily earlier in the day was missing. He had last been seen just before the QE 2 left her pier on the Hudson River, and the ship had been searched for him, without result. Ordinarily, a vessel that may have lost a man overboard will immediately turn back to look for him, but blundering about New York Harbor in the dark was scarcely a practical course of action for the nine-hundred-and-sixty-three-foot QE 2. So while the great ship proceeded seaward all hell broke loose behind her.

Within ten minutes of the initial call, Coast Guard Group New York, which is based on Governors Island, had a forty-one-foot utility boat under way, searching the Hudson from Battery Park north to the cruise-liner terminal, at Fiftieth Street; two other utility boats—one from Sandy Hook, one from Governors Island—were on their way to sweep New York Harbor from shore to shore between Governors Island and the Verrazano Bridge; the Point Herron was diverted from her original mission and ordered to search the QE 2's wake from the outer sea buoy of the harbor back to Ambrose Light Tower, six miles off Coney Island; Air Station Cape Cod had a Falcon jet in the air, on the way to cover the remaining patch of water, approximately between Ambrose Tower and the Verrazano; and air stations Brooklyn and Cape May were ordered to have helicopters ready to take up the search if necessary.

In the midst of this activity, at a couple of minutes before 11 P.M., the Andrea Beth suddenly came on the air. Her skipper reported that he had got his generator going, to power the radio, and that while he had no precise idea of his position his vessel was still following the course given him by Station Fire Island, toward Manasquan Inlet. To minimize the chances of the vessel's disappearing again, Petty Officer Laahs immediately set up a fifteen-minute communications schedule with her, and about twenty minutes later the Andrea Beth encountered the fishing vessel Jamaica, which was riding at anchor twelve miles due east of Manasquan, and got a precise position and course from her. There was little reason to suppose that the sportfisherman could not now find her way in, but, after so many hours' uncertainty, Laahs was unwilling to take any chance of losing her. Accordingly, he got in touch with Station Manasquan, which immediately dispatched a forty-one-footer as an escort.

Almost as soon as Laahs had finished talking to Manasquan, the QE 2 was back on the air, to notify all the would-be rescuers that her missing crew member had been discovered on board, safe and at least physically sound. The searching boats and aircraft immediately dispersed—all except the Point Herron, of course, which was still three and a half hours from the disabled Cin Mar II. Not until three-forty-five in the morning was the big scalloper under tow, headed for Atlantic City, which was some thirteen and a half hours away but was the closest port with the depth to accommodate



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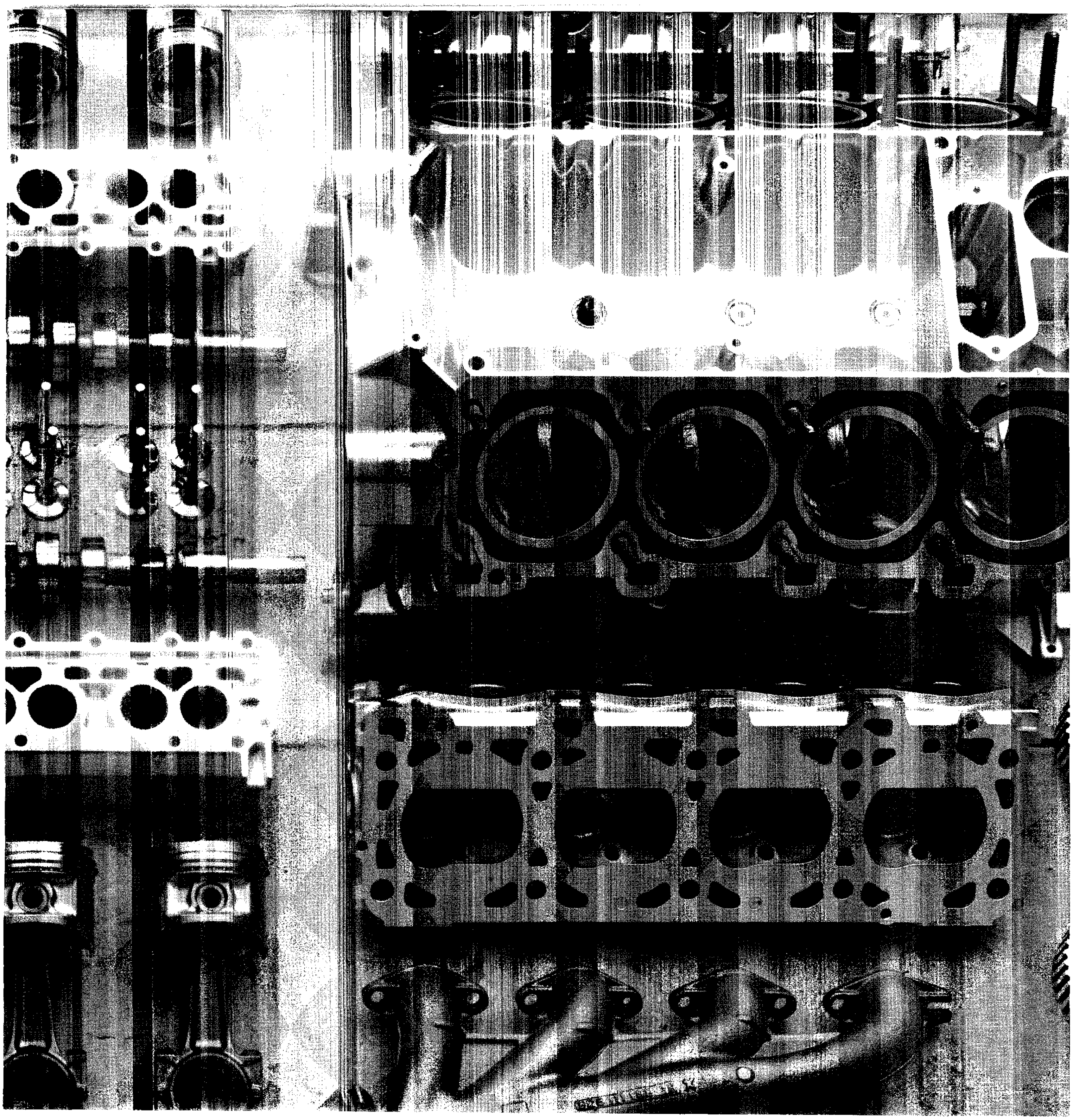

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her deep draft and the facilities to preserve her perishable cargo. In the event, the effort turned out to be unnecessary: at nine the following morning, with the Cin Mar II still well off the Jersey coast, her owners radioed that a company boat was on the way to rendezvous with the Point Herron. The company boat would take over the tow, and bring the Cin Mar II and her cargo back to Virginia.

From the Coast Guard's point of view, the outcome of the night's incidents was unusually neat: everyone was safe, and all three cases were wrapped up. This happy collective outcome was, of course, partly attributable to good luck. Had the QE 2's despondent steward really jumped overboard, he would probably have drowned, despite the Coast Guard's efforts. And had the weather been as intemperate as it was a few days earlier, or became a few days later, it might have posed considerable danger to the Andrea Beth, and even to the much larger Cin Mar II. Finally, the information available to the Coast Guard in all three cases was both complete and accurate, so the search for the Cin Mar II became a pro-forma exercise and the search for the Andrea Beth almost an intellectual diversion.

IF one is looking for the Coast Guard's conception of its new self, the Seventh Coast Guard District, comprising South Carolina and Georgia, most of Florida, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands, is a good place to find it. The district, which is one of ten administrative subdivisions of the service, has a land area of about a hundred and fifty thousand square miles, and so is middle-sized in that respect. But as far as the Coast Guard is concerned the real action occurs on nearly two million square miles of water, mostly the Caribbean Sea, that lie inside the Seventh's purview. Within or on the edge of these waters are two dozen national entities, some of them among the poorest in the world, and for the people in them the sea is highway, farm, border, playground, and, occasionally, battlefield. Over the past decade, more and more of the Coast Guard's resources have been poured into the Seventh District, and especially into South Florida. This largesse has rained down almost entirely in response to developments in a single aspect of the Coast Guard's law-enforcement mission—the prevention of drug smuggling. The service is responsible for upholding federal laws and regulations in the areas of conservation, pollution, port security, and marine safety—to name only a few—but among its personnel in the Seventh District law enforcement ("L.E." in conversation) usually means its efforts to prevent the smuggling of marijuana and cocaine into the United States.

The Coast Guard has installations scattered throughout the Seventh, but Miami is very much the nerve center. It contains District Headquarters, in a large, nondescript office building downtown; Base Miami, a big dockage and communications center tucked away unobtrusively off the causeway that runs between the city and Miami Beach; and an air station in Opa-Locka, a faintly seedy, largely Hispanic district in Miami's northwestern suburbs. The air station has seen better days, and is edged by clusters of not quite abandoned structures such as seem characteristic of underutilized military installations. The Coast Guard's part of the field is, however, a thriving enterprise, with eleven Falcon fan-jets and a covey of Dolphin helicopters on view. The Falcons, five of which are now equipped with very sophisticated radar and night-vision devices, are mostly employed spotting suspicious aircraft; in this application they collaborate with two E-2C Hawkeye radar-reconnaissance planes—midget AWACS planes—that the Coast Guard has on loan from the Navy. The smugglers, who until recently used the classic DC-7s and Beech 18s that have been flying mysterious errands between South Florida and the Caribbean for as long as anyone can remember, have now graduated to much faster twin-engine planes of four- to ten-seat capacity. Generally speaking, the Coast Guard has the task of tracking the airborne smugglers, and United States Customs is in charge of apprehending them once they land, using a miscellaneous fleet of its own, which includes both small, civilian-style aircraft and unmarked Blackhawks—big, fast military helicopters, with a considerably larger carrying capacity than the Coast Guard's Dolphins.

There are about a thousand pilots in the Coast Guard—some six hundred helicopter pilots and four hundred fixed-wing flyers. The attraction of the Coast Guard to younger pilots, I was told, is that fliers can enlist primarily in order to fly. In the Army or the Navy, one is an officer first and a flier second, but in the Coast Guard —at least, in the lower commissioned ranks—the opposite is true. In terms of missions, most younger fliers felt that they could live with the L.E. role—"We're still the good guys," one of them said—but that a lot of the older men weren't comfortable in the part. The pilots I talked to evinced a general distaste for being considered a subspecies of narc, but part of that attitude may have had to do with the very real competition between the Coast Guard and Customs in the search for drug smugglers. Customs has not only its own small air force (about a hundred assorted aircraft, including advanced long-range tracking aircraft borrowed from the Defense Department) but also its own not so small fleet of vessels—two hundred, of which many are so-called "fast boats": unmarked offshore powerboats, some confiscated from smugglers, that are collectively nicknamed Blue Thunder, because they have dark-colored hulls and noisy engines. Coördination between the two services is clearly a touchy subject. "We spend a lot of time chasing each other" is how one pilot delicately put it.

AMONG the salient activities of the Seventh District Coast Guard is the Haitian Migrant Interdiction Operation, which involves both law-enforcement and search-and-rescue functions. The H.M.I.O. came into being as a result of the Reagan Administration's decision, in 1981, to halt the mass illegal entry of Haitians into this country. Since the Haitians were fleeing their island nation in rickety sailboats and small coastal freighters, the obvious place to intercept them was on the water, before they actually arrived in the United States and either disappeared among this country's other illegal immigrants or, if they were discovered, could be ejected only by the tedious and expensive process of formal deportation. Accordingly, the United States and the government of Jean-Claude Duvalier signed a bilateral agreement, which is still in force, allowing armed teams from American Coast Guard cutters to board and search any Haitian-flag vessel on the high seas. The boarding teams, working on the assumption that anyone (aside from the crew) found aboard such vessels would shortly attempt to enter the United States illegally, were authorized to remove the hapless emigrants from Haitian ships or boats and summarily return them to Haiti. The H.M.I.O. was envisioned as a ninety-day effort, to be accomplished without funding, by diverting cutters from search-and-rescue or other law-enforcement patrols. It required the full-time services of at least one helicopter-carrying medium-endurance cutter, stationed in the Windward Passage, between Haiti and Cuba, and a fixed-wing search plane operating out of Guantánamo Bay. Inevitably, however, many refugee craft slipped past or around these sentinels, so most Coast Guard units that patrol Bahamian or Caribbean waters have had encounters with Haitian refugee-smugglers. Some eight years after the H.M.I.O. began, the tide of Haitian refugees has not begun to ebb. On the contrary, it has increased since the departure of Baby Doc, in 1986; last year, some four thousand Haitians were "interdicted" and shipped back to Port-au-Prince.

The H.M.I.O. is classified as law enforcement, but it often produces dramatic rescue operations. Refugee-smugglers, many of whom operate in the ruthless style of nineteenth-century slavers, use unseaworthy craft, packing their Haitian customers in from bilge to gunwales, and although Haitian sailors are renowned throughout the Caribbean for their skill, inevitably there are mishaps. In August, 1987, for example, a helicopter from the Coast Guard cutter Steadfast spotted a sixty-five-foot fishing vessel under Haitian flag which was disabled and drifting in the open ocean forty-five miles northwest of Great Inagua Island, in the Bahamas. A crowd of people was visible aboard—the pilot estimated their number to be over a hundred—so it seemed almost certain that the fishing boat was smuggling people out of Haiti. The Steadfast, a two-hundred-and-ten-footer, arrived on the scene shortly, and her skipper determined that the Haitian boat, the Green Waters, was helpless and was leaking badly. Small boats from the Steadfast began taking people off, but more and more passengers appeared from nooks and crannies belowdecks, and it became apparent that the sinking Green Waters was carrying more than three hundred people, many of them women and children. The Steadfast accordingly called upon a nearby Navy frigate, the U.S.S. Hancock, for the use of two motor surfboats to speed up the removal of passengers. Soon after the maneuver, conducted in six-to-eight-foot seas and winds of twenty-five knots, was successfully concluded, the Green Waters sank. Her passengers and crew, numbering three hundred and thirty-nine, were declared "economic migrants," and were presently delivered back to Port-au-Prince. No one checked, apparently, but these people presumably paid (and lost) the going rate—between one and two thousand American dollars a head, in advance—for their passage; since the per-capita income in Haiti is about three hundred dollars a year, fares like these are raised in the United States, by friends and relatives who have previously escaped.

ORTHODOX search-and-rescue activities also flourish in the Seventh. During fiscal 1987, the most recent period for which the Coast Guard has assembled statistics, the District was second in SAR cases only to the First (New England, southern New York, and northern New Jersey), with 9,336 to the First's 11,244. When it comes to anti-drug work, however, the Seventh District has no serious competition within the service. On most days, its nexus, at Base Miami, presents a spectrum of Coast Guard nautical technology. At small piers along the north end of the complex lies a flotilla of the Coast Guard "fast boats," or F.C.I.s (for Fast Coastal Interceptors), which are military adaptations of an offshore design that was introduced to the civilian market in 1983. The Coast Guard acquired five of the vessels in 1987, specifically to deal with the high-performance carriers being used by dopers either to bring small loads across the Gulf Stream from the Bahamas or to pick up cargo being offloaded from larger, longer-range mother ships. The F.C.I. is forty-three and a half feet long with a slender nine-and-a-half-foot beam and the customary deep-V bow to cushion the shocks of hitting the water at highway speed. Two three-hundred-and-seventy-five-horsepower diesel engines will drive the boat at a speed that the builder coyly gives as "40+ knots," but which may be as high as sixty, depending on the boat's load and on sea conditions. According to Coast Guard personnel I talked with, the F.C.I.s are a considerable improvement over drug boats of approximately the same design, being more seaworthy and also easier on their crews. Aside from teething problems that are more or less common to all high-performance powerboats, the F.C.I.s have so far performed as expected, and they certainly make the station's forty-one-foot utility boats, which are berthed next to them, look dumpy and old-fashioned. But the F.C.I.s, far more specialized vessels even than icebreakers or buoy tenders, are utterly unsuited to workaday tasks like towing or firefighting or search and rescue, and thus represent an uncharacteristic Coast Guard commitment to a single mission.

The same cannot be said of another new Coast Guard vessel—the hundred-and-ten-foot Island Class patrol boat, intended as a replacement for the Cape Class ninety-five-footers that were built in the nineteen-fifties. The Coast Guard has ordered thirty-seven of the new craft, and thirty-two have been delivered from their builder, the Bollinger Machine Shop & Shipyard, in Louisiana. Like the vessels they are replacing, the Island boats represent sound, middle-of-the-road design: they are reasonably fast (a maximum speed of slightly under thirty knots), have a range of

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about eighteen hundred miles, and are intended to be capable of five-day patrols without replenishment of fuel or fresh water. Fifteen of the first twenty-one boats were assigned to the hot drug-smuggling area of the southeastern United States and the Caribbean.

As drug smugglers have grown more sophisticated, the blockading Coast Guard has come to rely more and more on intelligence—a term that often means betrayal of one drug exporter by another—for its interceptions. Even so, the service feels that nothing can replace having patrol vessels constantly and unpredictably on the water, to spot targets of opportunity and also to be available for search and rescue and other work. Captain John C. Trainor, a wiry New Englander, who is one of the Coast Guard's principal experts in the field of drug interdiction, told me about the strategy involved: "We operate in what I like to call the three-tiered approach to drug interdiction. The first tier is off transit countries, especially in the deep Caribbean or on the deep Pacific side, close to South America. Then, we have the transit zone, usually the choke points coming up through the Caribbean—the Yucatán, Windward, Mona, and Anegada Passages. Also included in that is the area around the Bahamas. This archipelagic area is a big one, because plane drops usually occur there. Planes will fly in with the dope and drop it to high-speed coastal boats, which will dart into the mainland United States at forty or fifty knots. And then there are the arrival zones, from twelve miles out—the Customs borders—to the United States, where you get a profusion of boats, and it's even harder to sort out what you have. We have to go on intelligence reports, and profiles and other observations of the boat. How is it riding in the water? If it's a fishing boat, does it have fishing gear out? When we talk to him over the radio, what does he say to us? Does he give normal answers to normal questions? Where's he going? Who are the people on board?"

Tactically speaking, the Coast Guard deploys its largest, longest-range vessels—the big medium-endurance and high-endurance cutters, ranging from two hundred to nearly four hundred feet in length—on patrol off the northern coasts of South America. "My feeling is that we want to be as offensive as possible with these drug traffickers, meet them as close to the source country as we can," Trainor said. "Because the more they get diffused up here, the more traffic we have to sort out and the harder it is for me to detect them. If we miss them down there, then we'll focus on the passages and try to catch them there, using a combination of medium-endurance cutters, aircraft, and aerostats"—these are radar-carrying balloons that are tethered to vessels—"and if they slip by us the next area might be somewhere in the Bahamas. There we'd probably use a ninety-five- or hundred-and-ten-foot cutter, which will be out for three, four, five days at a time. Then, when we get in close, we'll use everything we've got—the forty-one-footers, the forty-four-footers, anything I have left."

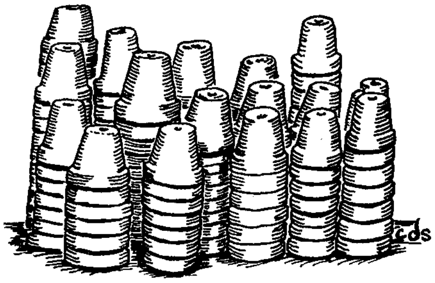
Along the American coast, the situation is in many respects similar to what it was during Prohibition, but there are a couple of salient differences. For one, no important traffic in marijuana or cocaine originates in Canada, whereas during Prohibition the long Canadian border with the United States provided a large number of crossing points. Another change, Captain Trainor said, is in the type of person the Coast Guard encounters. "A lot of the rumrunners were more feisty, volatile," he explained. "They had put up the money for the run, so they were willing to fight for their product, but nowadays the people we catch are usually not the big-money, behind-the-scenes types. They're the mules or the runners or the hired hands. Once we come on the scene, they just pack their little ditty bags, put their toothbrush in, hold out their hands. They expect to be squirrelled away for some indefinite time, and I suppose they expect their families to be well compensated while they're in jail. So far, we have not had anybody shoot back at us, where in the rum wars we did have people shoot back at us."

Two drugs—marijuana and cocaine—dominate the Coast Guard's anti-drug activity. Marijuana, to be profitable, must arrive in bulk, and a minimum shipment might be about a thousand pounds, known in the trade as a mom-and-pop load. "The smugglers don't have to *be* a mom and pop," Trainor quickly assured me. "They're probably some people who owe money on their boat and go down and take a load and try to get it back into the United States." The larger marijuana-carrying vessels will still carry contraband by the ton, he continued, but they no longer load it in the free-and-easy fashion of the nineteen-seventies, when Coast Guard planes frequently observed freighters closing the coast with bales of pot piled all over the decks. Now hidden compartments are in vogue. Trainor cited the case of a freighter called the Alex, a so-called mother ship that moved up and down the Florida coast, transferring bales of marijuana to boats that would run out from shore for their pickup. When the Alex was snagged by the Coast Guard, ten tons of marijuana was still aboard, a lot of it in concealed stowage areas. The confiscated vessel was towed into the Miami River and tied up, and some time later Coast Guardsmen being trained in boarding techniques were allowed to use her as a sort of laboratory. "They were running through techniques of finding hidden compartments, and they found a mess table with tile decking around it that was newer than the rest of the tile," Trainor said. "It wasn't as worn, although it was the same pattern. So they lifted the tile and, lo and behold, underneath it they found a welded hatch. They cut loose the hatch and found a hold full of marijuana, over twenty tons, still in the vessel."

There are obvious difficulties in operating an orthodox naval blockade over a vast area without abrading the feelings of nominally friendly governments that have small control over their own territorial waters. Nevertheless, the pressure put on marijuana smugglers, whose vessels are for the most part relatively large and slow, was enough to force a shift to cocaine as the seaborne smugglers' product of choice. Not only is cocaine profitable in much smaller quantities than marijuana—kilograms as opposed to tons—and thus more readily concealable but as evidence it is also much easier to dispose of during pursuit, because it sinks when it's thrown overboard, while marijuana floats. Admittedly, there are no Coast Guard statistics on relative success and failure in interdicting the two drugs beyond the amounts of both actually confiscated, but those totalled about nine hundred tons of marijuana and seventy-three hundred pounds of cocaine in the 1986 fiscal year. "Everything you hear on interdiction percentages is a guess," Captain Trainor admitted. "The only thing I think is a pretty good indication is the volume available as a trend analysis, and the price, also as a trend analysis. I can tell you that in Florida the volume of marijuana is down and the price of marijuana is up. That indicates to me that we're doing a pretty good job and we're hurting them. On the other hand, the volume of cocaine is up, purity is up, price is down. Which means we're not doing as good a job on cocaine. Whether it's coming by sea, whether it's coming by air, whether it's coming in cargo containers, whether it's coming by mules, or by people carrying it on their bodies or in their luggage coming across, it's very difficult to tell."

WHEN the ninety-five-foot Cape Shoalwater was in port, which was about half the time, she was berthed not at a Coast Guard base but at a lonely finger pier jutting into the Intracoastal Waterway at Riviera Beach, about two hours' drive north of Miami. At the landward end of the pier was a small house trailer, used for storing items of gear not needed aboard, and a weed-grown parking lot, for the crew's automobiles. The Shoalwater (she was named for a headland in the state of Washington) was typical of her dwindling class: she was built in 1956, and, like her sisters, was to have been disposed of in the mid-nineteen-seventies. But funding for replacement construction fell through, and, like the other ninety-fives, she was given an overhaul calculated to extend her working life by a decade. That decade and a bit more passed before the Shoalwater was decommissioned last December. Some months earlier, I had spent five days aboard her on a drug-interdiction patrol in the nearer Bahamas.

Four- or five-day Bahamian patrols had occupied much of the Shoalwater's time in recent years, and her successes were documented by sixty-five drug-bust symbols—likenesses of three-leaved marijuana sprigs—painted on her funnel. Sixty-one of the symbols were an appropriate green, and the others white. When I asked why, someone told me that the white ones represented cocaine seizures. No one mentioned, however, that the Shoalwater's most recent bust had been eighteen months earlier.



The skipper, Lieutenant (j.g.) James L. McCauley, was a 1985 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, and the Shoalwater was only his second assignment. He was a quiet, slender man of middle height who looked not unlike a recruiting-poster version of a junior officer: he had a very short crewcut and what appeared to be a fresh shave and a newly pressed uniform at any hour of the day or night. As the only commissioned officer aboard, he was more or less constantly on display; even his cabin, the only private accommodation in the boat, was in an area that also contained the forward berthing compartment, which held four enlisted men, a two-berth chief petty officers' cabin, and toilet-and-shower facilities used by all of them.

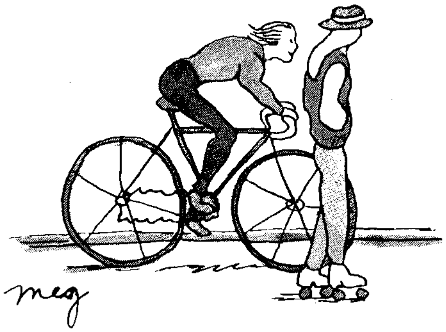
The second-in-command, Chief Quartermaster Mark J. Van de Voorde, though he was only in his thirties, had graying hair and the impenetrable aplomb that some chiefs wear like armor. His manner was a considerable contrast to that of Boatswain's Mate Second Class John C. Stas, who was in charge of the deck force. A huge ex-marine from Youngstown, Ohio, Stas had a personality as outgoing as Chief Van's was private; anything Stas had on his mind was likely to be public property fairly quickly. He and the chief were the two oldest men in the boat—the only crew members who were older than the Shoalwater herself.

The Shoalwater, having no dictated targets, was free to follow her own itinerary, subject to radioed orders from Miami. Once we had cleared Lake Worth Inlet and were on our way across the Gulf Stream, Lieutenant McCauley told me in general terms what he had in mind. The Bahamas and their southern outliers, the Turks and Caicos Islands, run in a generally southeast-northwest line, paralleling Haiti and Cuba to their south and pointing toward South Florida. Boats running up the island chain will generally hop from cay to cay, using the low-lying islets as shelter both from weather and from search vessels' radar. Although deep channels cut through the Bahamas at several points, much of the water is very shallow: on seemingly endless stretches of bank the water depth may be a fathom or less. As it happened, the Shoalwater required about a fathom in which to float, and ten feet made the skipper and crew much more comfortable. By sending the Shoalwater's outboard-powered Rigid-Hull Inflatable on ahead as a guide, the skipper could edge the larger vessel into some remarkably tight spots, but if the cutter, with a maximum speed of about twenty-four knots, were to cut off fast-moving drug boats she had to be positioned across the likely track of northbound traffic. Lying in wait and picking up suspicious vessels on her bridge radar, she could materialize out of darkness or from behind a headland when it was too late for her quarry to get away. That, at any rate, was the theory.

The passage across the Gulf Stream was calm and uneventful, with the Shoalwater's twin diesels thumping noisily away. Their noise was everywhere, especially belowdecks, and several of the men with whom I was sharing the main berthing compartment had learned to sleep with earplugs in order to get any rest at all. The berth assigned to me was the lowest in a metal-framed tier of three; it was available on this voyage because its regular occupant, one of the engineers, had just gone AWOL—an occurrence that the crew was understandably reluctant to talk about. (More important, the engineers' department was also lacking its chief, who was on leave, and before the trip was over the two remaining rated men were approaching exhaustion from overwork in the hot, noisy engine room.) The living space, about ten feet fore and aft and twenty abeam, held eight bunks and an equal number of metal lockers—like the ones in high-school gyms—where the men kept their possessions; it also contained a walled-off toilet-and-shower compartment and, against the forward bulkhead, a big air-conditioning unit—a piece of equipment that was vital in the sealed and otherwise airless space. The compartment's exit, in the forward bulkhead, was closed off by a watertight door, and the chamber was usually lit only by a dim red light, so that the off-watch could sleep. Men who wanted to read in their berths could rig screens of blankets or underwear to contain the light from built-in lamps at the head of the berths. The head of my berth, as I soon discovered, was right over the starboard propeller shaft, which was slightly out of true. When the boat was under way, which was most of the time, the shaft produced a remarkable variety of noises—from a slow grinding, like someone sharpening an immense knife, to a rapid metallic chattering, like a double handful of large coins being shaken in a steel drum.

SHORTLY after dusk on the second day of our patrol, off a Bahamian islet named Great Isaac, we picked up a slowly moving blob on the radar, and soon overhauled a squarish, top-heavy vessel. She turned out to be the Haitian freighter Vierge Merti, bound for Florida. Like many other Caribbean cargo carriers—some of which are always visible tied up to piers in the dismal upper reaches of the Miami River—the Vierge Merti was about fifty-five feet long and built of wood, with a surprisingly fine-lined hull topped by a barnlike superstructure. She was riding high and light, and though she had no functioning radio, her crew knew what was expected, and brought her to a wallowing halt as the Shoalwater drew alongside, fixing them in the glare of her spotlight. On the cutter's afterdeck, our crew swung the Rigid-Hull Inflatable up and out of its chocks as the boarding team readied itself to go across.

When the Seventh District's personnel are making an official boarding of another vessel, they strap on heavy bulletproof vests beneath their shirts and orange life jackets over them, and are further encumbered by wide belts, each carrying a holstered .45 automatic, two extra clips of bullets, a spray can of Mace, a long four- or five-cell flashlight, handcuffs, and a radio transceiver. And just before climbing into the R.H.I. each member of the Shoalwater's four-man team pulled on a pair of disposable rubber gloves, from a supply bought with the ship's own funds. These, I was told, were worn only for boarding Haitian vessels, and as a matter of personal choice. The reason, of course, had to do with the fear of contracting AIDS rather than with the expected state of the boarded vessel, though most Haitian craft are visibly rat-infested and, by American standards, startlingly dirty.



The Vierge Merti's crew of five, ordered to stay where they could be seen from the Shoalwater, sat on the freighter's upper deck and watched us without expression while the boarding party went below to search. The operation, which concentrated on compartments that might contain drugs or refugees, took about an hour and uncovered nothing beyond the expected state of squalor. A team going armed aboard a strange craft, frequently in the dark, creates an obvious high among the boarders and a perceptible level of tension among those left behind; the aftermath of an unsuccessful search is a corresponding downer for all hands. But as the Vierge Merti lumbered away into the night I wondered how her crew felt about being invaded by gun-toting foreigners, politely though they may have conducted themselves. I well remembered the furor aroused among American boatmen three or four years ago when the Coast Guard drastically increased its boardings of fishing and pleasure craft, and some armed personnel began to get carried away in their new role. By the beginning of 1988, outrage had simmered down to irritation, partly in response to improved standards of behavior among the young petty officers who make up most boarding teams, but it was suddenly rekindled by the announcement, in mid-April of 1988, of a policy known as Zero Tolerance. Under the strictures of Zero Tolerance, the discovery by a Customs or Coast Guard boarding party of any proscribed drugs, no matter how small the quantity, was automatic grounds for confiscation of the entire vessel. The hapless owner might be quite innocent, but if he could not prove his innocence to a government tribunal (not a civilian jury) his boat would be sold at auction.

Headlines duly trumpeted the seizure of several sizable vessels, mostly for the discovery of tiny amounts of drugs of unknown provenance. One such case was that of the eighty-two-foot yacht Monkey Business, which had earlier figured in the downfall of the Presidential candidate Gary Hart; in early May, she was boarded off Bimini (by, as it happened, a party from the Cape Shoalwater) and seized after a single joint was found in the pocket of a jacket hanging in a locker.

The Coast Guard's enforcement of Zero Tolerance aroused the anger of much of the boating community and lost the service more of the affection with which it had previously been regarded. By mid-1988, the outcry against the excesses of Zero Tolerance had reached such a volume that Congress found the nerve to pass legislation that essentially allowed a boat owner to defend himself by pleading ignorance of the presence of drugs aboard his vessel. At about the same time, someone in authority apparently noticed that the possession of drugs in international waters—beyond the twelve-mile Customs limit—is not a crime; accordingly, the Coast Guard's boarding officers now have to demonstrate that drugs aboard an American-flag vessel in international waters were intended for import or export before they or the carrier can be picked up.

By nightfall of the fourth day, it seemed that the Shoalwater was going to draw another blank. Then shortly after eleven, the bridge watch picked up a single radar blip, moving fast and running parallel to the islands. Under the rules of interdiction that operate in the Bahamas, the Shoalwater could intercept only boats that were more than three miles from any Bahamian shore, and for some time the quarry obstinately held close to the demarcation line, with the cutter paralleling its course a couple of miles farther out, her running lights extinguished and her crew at the ready. With each passing minute, the unseen vessel's behavior—her speed, her course, her own absence of lights—seemed more suspicious. In the Shoalwater's wheelhouse, the sense of anticipation was almost palpable, but it was the thrill of the chase, not the conviction of a crusade. Finally, at about eleven-thirty, the radar blip diverged far enough from shore to indicate that the boat was unquestionably in international waters, and Lieutenant McCauley pushed the Shoalwater's throttles all the way forward. When the cutter's big searchlight picked out the previously unseen boat, I could feel the satisfaction around me: she was about forty feet long, a twin-engine fibreglass sportfisherman with no name on her stern and with Florida registration numbers on her bow; she was open except for a small cabin forward; and she was crewed, as far as we could see from a hundred yards away, by a pair of young men—very startled young men—in swimming trunks.

On being hailed by bullhorn, the boat obediently pulled up and waited for the Shoalwater's R.H.I. Her registration papers gave her home port as Miami and her owner as (I'll say) Jaime García (I have changed all the names associated with the intercepted boat), but the driver's licenses of the crew identified the skipper as Raul Ibañez, of Hialeah, and his associate as Hernan Machado, of the same town. Both young men, who claimed to be friends of the owner, had been asked to sit at the after end of their boat's open cockpit during the search, and Machado instantly complied, but Ibañez seemed at first inclined to argue. Then he shrugged, took a beer from a portable cooler, and propped himself against the gunwale.

So far, as I already knew from talking with Lieutenant McCauley, the intercepted boat conformed to the pattern for a cocaine smuggler: relatively new, fast, unobtrusive, and operated by men other than her owner. Accordingly, the Lieutenant called Group Miami on a radio frequency employed only by the military, to find out whether the headquarters computer had any record of the boat as she was identified by her registration number or her crew. None of us were surprised to learn that she was already on Miami's "hit list," suspected of smuggling cocaine into Fort Lauderdale. By this time, two of the boarding party were out of sight in the small cabin forward, searching for hidden compartments, while the other two kept an eye on Machado and Ibañez. (The latter had swallowed two beers almost without taking a breath and was starting on his third.) Without warning, the Shoalwater's radio began crackling with more information: Raul Ibañez, it

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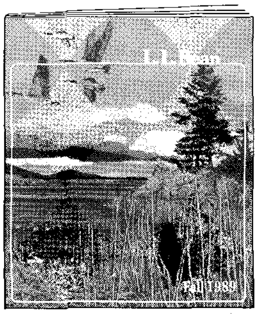

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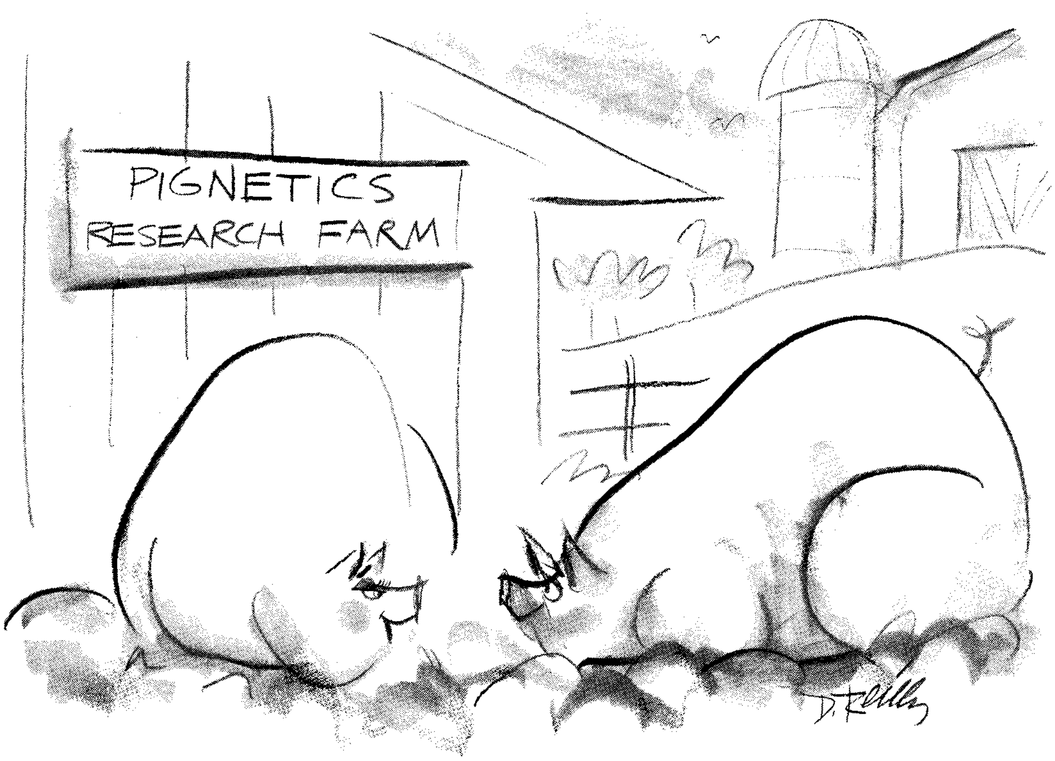

"*I like you just the way you are.*"

• •

off into the night. The subsequent debriefing on the Shoalwater's afterdeck was, to put it mildly, constrained. The boarding party had not at all liked the idea of being under their own machine gun, and they were vocally unanimous that Ibañez, if not his companion, had somehow put one over on them. It was a frustrating end to the voyage, and the epilogue—the trip back across the Gulf Stream in a wicked little sea that reduced several of the crew to utter misery—was a fitting coda to the five-day patrol.

IN the political geography of Washington, D.C., the headquarters of the Coast Guard could scarcely be farther from the citadels of power. Unlike the immemorial giants—Labor, Justice, Commerce, Agriculture—that surround the Mall below the Capitol, the Department of Transportation occupies a block-long office building on Seventh Street, S.W., right across from another Johnny-come-lately, Housing and Urban Development, and well away from the beaten tourist track. Until about five years ago, the Coast Guard, as the numerically largest element of Transportation, had its headquarters in the Seventh Street building, but then it was shunted to a far smaller structure of its own on the banks of the Anacostia River, in the bleak heath of southwest Washington. A tongue of land adjoining Coast Guard Headquarters has been renamed Transpoint, but Washingtonians at all familiar with the area refer to it by its original appellation, Buzzard Point.

In recent years, the Coast Guard has had increasing difficulty getting its financial requirements built into the over-all federal-budget request. Even after an appropriation has been approved by authorities in Transportation and the Office of Management and Budget, the Coast Guard must, like everyone else, run a further gantlet—the ritualized congressional smoke-and-mirrors exercise that is called reconciliation, by which specific appropriations expand or contract in order to

seemed, was wanted by Interpol and the government of Spain on suspicion of terrorist activity, including bombings, and was to be considered "armed and dangerous." Ibañez employed many aliases, and we were instructed to stand by for a physical description of him. In the meantime, Miami wanted his Social Security number and the number of his driver's license, the date of his birth, and a description of any identifying scars or marks.

From the wing of the Shoalwater's bridge, about thirty yards away, we could see that Ibañez was obviously not armed, and that while he might on other occasions be dangerous—he was a well-set-up young man—he now seemed merely tight, having just finished his fourth can of beer in the space of about half an hour. Still, there was the possibility that the Shoalwater's ferret trap contained a wolverine, and it was only sensible to be on the safe side. Over the walkie-talkie, Lieutenant McCauley informed the boarding party of the latest developments, and the Coast Guardsmen in the cockpit casually drifted back out of Ibañez's reach. At the same time, Boatswain's Mate Stas, whose station during boardings was on the near-side bridge wing with an M-16 automatic rifle at his side, now brought out the cutter's M-60 machine gun and slipped it onto a metal bracket.

Down on the detained boat, Ibañez had become talkative and less belligerent—perhaps it was the sight of the M-60. He and his friend, he said, were on their way to Nassau from George Town, in the Exuma Islands, where they had spent some time. After a few more friendly questions, Ibañez admitted that he and Machado had in fact been arrested the day before and thrown out of George Town for overstaying their visitor's visas.

A few minutes later, Miami checked in to ask if Ibañez had any tattoos or discolorations on his left elbow or biceps; the wanted man was also known to have a deeply pitted face and a discolored right cheek. The Shoalwater's Ibañez, still wearing only swimming trunks, quite evidently bore none of those marks. In addition, an inch-by-inch search of the boat revealed absolutely nothing that was incriminating—nothing beyond the fact of two young men several hundred miles from home in a fishing boat that had no fishing equipment. At half past two in the morning, the sportfisherman was allowed to proceed, and Juan Ibañez, his sagging spirits instantly revived, gave the Shoalwater a Cagneyesque sneer of farewell as he roared match the probably imaginary total amount of expected revenue. In the highly competitive world of appropriations-getting, the Coast Guard labors under two serious handicaps. One is a shortage of advocates, both civilian fans and congressional godparents. The members of Congress who speak up regularly for the Coasties are nearly all on one House Committee, Merchant Marine and Fisheries, and one experienced congressional aide told me flatly, "The Coast Guard just doesn't have a constituency here." The waterborne public, which owns sixteen and a half million pleasure craft, has yet to become a lobbying force commensurate with its numbers.

The service's other problem may lie in the diffuseness of its missions. The recent rash of oil spills, for example, put a spotlight on the Coast Guard's environmental responsibilities, displacing the often unavailing battle to uphold the laws against drug smuggling, which had been receiving most of the press attention. But the Coast Guard is also responsible for enforcement of all other federal laws on the high seas and inland waters, including the supervision, out to the two-hundred-mile economic limit, of commercial fishing in respect to quantity and type of fish caught and by whom. Coast Guard patrols in areas like the Bering Sea are the only restraints on foreign poachers of this valuable, diminishing resource, just as cutters off the Atlantic seaboard provide a brake on domestic fishermen who will catch, clean, and ice down virtually anything they can haul over the side.

In the early seventies, public concern resulted in a barrage of legislation, including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Water Quality Improvement Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, and the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act. Each of these laws has required a continuing Coast Guard response, which in practical terms means researching, writing, and administering regulations, allocating and training people to handle the administration, and sometimes finding the equipment called for by a new mission—for instance, floating booms used to contain oil spills.

Downplayed as it may currently be, the search-and-rescue mission continues to occupy most of the service's two hundred aircraft and twenty-two hundred ships and boats at least part of the time; they responded to some fifty-six thousand calls for assistance in fiscal 1987. On top of that well-known responsibility are others, less recognized but perhaps equally important: the siting, operation, and maintenance of the world's most elaborate system of navigational lights, buoys, and beacons (more than forty thousand individual aids) and of such long-range electronic navigation systems as Loran and Omega; the safety inspection of cargo- and passenger-carrying vessels (forty thousand of them last year) and the development of new standards for their design, construction, and operation; the licensing and certifying of some seventy thousand merchant-marine officers and seamen; the operation of the International Ice Patrol, which, as a heritage of the Titanic disaster, still charts the annual migration of icebergs into the shipping lanes of the Atlantic; the operation of the Coast Guard's own expensive, aging flotilla of icebreaking vessels in both polar and inland waters, on behalf of the Navy, science, and commerce; the supervision of the nation's port system, an activity that involves both environmental and military protection, and the development of ship-traffic-regulation services in the port approaches; and, soft-pedalled in recent years, the maintenance of a military force, which has served in all the nation's major wars since 1790, including those in Korea and Vietnam.

Through the nineteen-seventies, the Coast Guard's evolving concerns seemed to be, first, safeguarding life at sea and, second, enforcing new laws that were passed to protect what was left of the marine environment. At the beginning of this decade, however, national—or, at least, governmental—priorities began to shift, and the Coast Guard's shifted with them. Two of the Reagan Administration's strongest enthusiasms, military preparedness and law and order, caused the service to reëxamine its military posture and attach itself more closely to the Navy, through a program promulgated in 1984 and known as the Maritime Defense Zone, or M.D.Z., and then to

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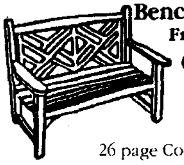

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hurl itself, with almost desperate enthusiasm, into the field of drug interdiction. Both efforts seem philosophically congenial to that part of the service—usually senior commissioned officers and very young enlisted men—which is most closely attuned to the military past and to political conservatism generally. The argument has also been made, semi-officially, that emphasis on the M.D.Z and drug interdiction is the only way to alleviate the Coast Guard's budget shortages, by enabling it to pick off some of the vast amounts of money that the Administration and Congress routinely allocated for defense and, lately, the so-called war on drugs.

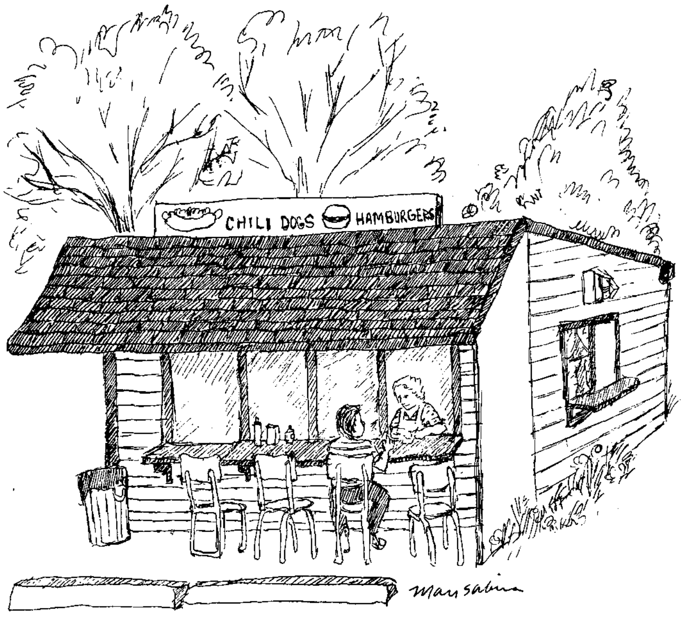
In the past half-dozen years, the Coast Guard's annual budget within the Transportation Department has run from slightly less than two billion dollars to two and a half billion. Far and away the biggest allocation has been for Operating Expenses, with only about eleven per cent going to Acquisition, Construction, and Improvement, the general heading that represents the organization's future. Percentages aside, the Coast Guard's budget is so small in absolute terms that a single large new vessel could devour a couple of years' A. C. & I. funding; a new icebreaker, for example, would cost between two hundred and seventy million and four hundred million dollars. That sum compares well, however, with the Navy's estimated cost for a single nuclear submarine of the Seawolf Class: one and three-quarters billion dollars. When both the requirements of new missions and the obsolescence of existing equipment—a number of the Coast Guard's active vessels date back to the Second World War—are taken into consideration, regular funding alone is evidently inadequate. And, in fact, additional money has been forthcoming, in 1982, 1984, 1986, and 1987, from the Department of Defense. When the Reagan Administration took office, defense spending rose from two hundred and eight billion dollars to a peak, in fiscal 1985, of three hundred and twenty-three billion, adjusted for inflation. Moreover, the anti-drug legislation that Congress passed in 1986 resulted in the hurling of immense wads of money at every aspect of the nation's narcotics problem; in fiscal 1987, the Coast Guard's direct share of this bonanza was a hundred and twenty-eight million dollars, with sixty million more anti-drug dollars coming to it through the Defense Department.

Money like this does not yet get appropriated for equipment to contain oil spills or for the most appropriate new search-and-rescue gear, and since the Coast Guard will presumably be saddled with future missions like the H.M.I.O. many observers feel that the service must seek out and acquire ever more duties that can tap the deeper springs of appropriations funding. The Coast Guard, small though it is, has so potentially large a brief that it can logically involve itself in almost anything taking place on or along the water. This protean capability has for years been a liability; turning it into a tool that the service can use to make bureaucratic hay is a strategy that the current commandant, Admiral Paul A. Yost, Jr., clearly understands.

THE commandant of the Coast Guard has for the men and women who serve under him the apparent omnipotence of an absolute monarch and the immediate presence of, say, a Second World War Army division commander. These attributes can be emphasized by someone who has strong opinions and great energy, and the incumbent commandant has enough of both so that some who serve under him have rechristened the service he heads the Yost Guard. Admiral Yost grew up in St. Petersburg, Florida, and received his bachelor of science from the Coast Guard Academy in 1951; that means he effectively joined the service two years after the end of the Second World War, when the nation was turning away from things military and the Coast Guard was once again redefining itself. "The Coast Guard I joined in 1947 was primarily a search-and-rescue, aids-to-navigation, and marine-safety Coast Guard," the Admiral wrote recently in a naval journal.

Like other members of his Academy class, Paul Yost received his commission just in time for the Korean War, and, like most of today's high-ranking officers in any military service, he went back to school after the fighting was over. By 1964, he had earned two postgraduate degrees and had graduated from the Naval War College. In 1966, he was made commander of the cutter Resolute, based in San Francisco, and three years later he became commander of a combat task group in Vietnam. From 1970 to 1974, he served in Washington in the Aids to Navigation Division and as Special Assistant to the Coast Guard's chief counsel; then he became captain of the Port for Seattle; and in 1975 he was sent to the Seventeenth District—Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. Three years later, he made rear admiral and became commander of the Eighth District, which contains all the Gulf Coast except the peninsula of Florida.

Near the beginning of the Reagan Administration, Yost returned to Washington, as chief of staff at Coast Guard Headquarters, and, as is customary, he served in that post for three years. In 1984, he was promoted to what is perhaps the second most important job in the service—that of three-star commander of the Atlantic Area, with headquarters on Governors Island. Then, in 1986, Vice-Admiral Yost was given his fourth star and named the Coast Guard's eighteenth commandant—an appointment he will hold until mid-1990. Despite the importance of his previous posi-



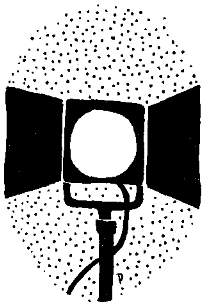
tion, Yost had not been on the short list compiled by some Washington insiders, one of whom told me, "He came out of nowhere for the commandant's job." This person, a congressional official, added darkly, "No one knows how much Yost's being a Mormon had to do with his selection, but there was a very powerful Mormon influence in the Reagan Administration."

Admiral Yost openly shared many of the Reagan Administration's goals, two of which—military preparedness and winning the war against drugs—impinged directly on his service. In late 1987, I talked for about an hour with the Admiral in his Washington office, a handsome suite of rooms in the Transpoint Building, with as much of a view as southwest Washington can offer. The Admiral is a slightly built man of middle height with an eager, angular face. Like many other partly bald men—Douglas MacArthur and the actor Sean Connery spring to mind—he can take ten years off his age simply by putting on his cap. In conversation, his intensity expresses itself in a torrent of words, freshets of conviction that seem equally forceful in matters of detail and in broad concepts. More than most other Coast Guard officers I have met, though, he tends to talk in military idioms, and in common with many military commanders he has a tendency to speak of his command in the first person singular.

Indeed, a militarily prepared Coast Guard has been one of Admiral Yost's two top priorities. "In any conventional war," he said to me, "we will see terrorist attacks, we will see saboteurs, we will see a disruption of the infrastructure of this country. On the waterways I've got loading facilities, ammunition facilities, fuel facilities, refineries, nuclear reactors, communications lines—a myriad infrastructures. That's one perspective. The other perspective is that this country looks to fight a war by forward power projection. We want to fight the war away from this country. To do that, you've got to get your own warships to sea, out of the ports. That's what the Maritime Defense Zone is all about: you protect the ports, you protect the port facilities, you have the anti-submarine responsibility up to two hundred miles offshore. We can't effectively fight a conventional war without a Maritime Defense Zone on both coasts—and the Gulf Coast is just as important. That takes men and money and resources, and planning and trying, but I think it's worth it."

And where does all that come from, I asked.

"It comes out of the hide," Admiral Yost replied, using a popular Washington phrase for expenditure not matched by appropriation. "It means there's something I'm not doing as much of or as well as I did before. Maybe it's fisheries patrol, maybe it's an oil-pollution patrol, maybe it's search and rescue, maybe it's something else, but it's a cost. And although I'm getting some funding for it and I'm expanding my reserves somewhat it's still a cost out of the hide."



Admiral Yost's other top priority for his Coast Guard is success in its fight against drug smuggling. He is probably not the first American to have called drug abuse "perhaps the most formidable opponent this nation has faced since the Second World War," but he also sees that the Coast Guard's part in any ultimate victory is restricted "to a concentrated interdiction effort, to hold the line until the other aspects of the national strategy can take hold: prevention, treatment, research, and international coöperation."

"The line" to which Admiral Yost referred was until fairly recently the relatively narrow strip of water around the United States, and especially around the peninsula of Florida, but now that drug smuggling has become three-dimensional the old rules of blockade no longer obtain. The airborne cocaine smuggler is clearly the Coast Guard's most important current target, and the most frustrating. Air traffic over the Caribbean is continuous, day and night, and most of it is innocent, so the Coast Guard's problem is finding small aircraft in the expanse of sky and then sifting the occasional dope smuggler from the hundred and fifty-odd radar targets that may be visible at any given moment. Even when the Coast Guard's E-2Cs and Falcons isolate a suspect, there may be little more they can accomplish.

"The only thing that we've been able to do so far is lock onto the suspect aircraft and follow him wherever he's going," Admiral Yost said. "He's in control. He decides whether he's going to Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, make a surface drop to a waiting boat in the Bahamas, or go into an abandoned airfield in the Bahamas. We're at his mercy. He makes the decision, and once he does we probably don't have more than a few minutes' notice of what he's going to do."

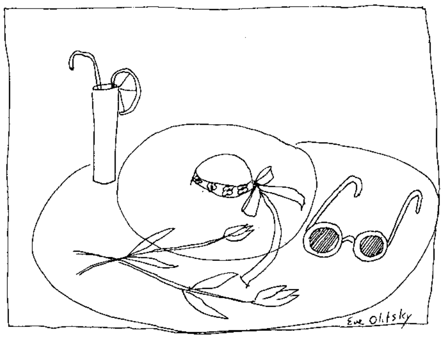
Typically, the smuggler may put down at one of dozens of informal airstrips that scar the Bahamian islands. Often, the dirt runway, bulldozed out for Cessnas and Piper Cubs, is far too short for the Falcon, which requires two thousand feet in order to land—and twice as long a stretch to take off. And if the runway happens to be long enough a smuggler is likely to pull a truck across the middle of it as soon as his plane is on the ground. "Then you've got about half an hour to get an apprehension unit to that airfield, to take this guy down," Admiral Yost said. "In half an hour, he will have unloaded half a ton of cocaine, he will have refuelled the airplane and taken off or abandoned it there, and everything will be gone. So if you get there in forty minutes, forget it. The expensive E-2C, the scramble of the Falcon, the standby it takes to keep the Falcon en route, the pilots around the clock—all that is for naught. The time and distance factors are critical, and until we can whip the time and distance factors we can't stop the cocaine on a regular, routine basis."

IN the last few years, three considerable changes in drug-smuggling tactics seem to have taken place. One, the substitution of planes for boats bringing cocaine into South Florida, is a continuing frustration for all enforcement agencies. A second is the use of shipping containers, which travel as deck cargo on the sea and, when the freighter carrying them reaches port, can be mounted on trailers or railroad flatcars for final delivery; thousands arrive in the United States every working day, and checking even a fraction of them would stop the operation of every American port in its tracks. Finally, the routes for incoming cocaine and marijuana seem to be shifting in a manner that takes enforcement right out of the Coast Guard's bailiwick. Last year, Robert Bonner, then the United States Attorney in Los Angeles, told the Associated Press, "The Colombians are suffering such significant losses in Florida that it has become more desirable to come up through the Southwest, even though the route is thousands of miles longer and far more costly."

In Southern California, particularly, the shift in dope-smuggling routes is reflected in headlines reporting bigger and bigger drug busts and more and more drug-inspired violence—headlines that have been routine in urban South Florida for a decade. If the politics of narcotics enforcement works like other politics, anti-drug money and personnel are now likely to flow to the new center of effort, along the Mexican border, leaving the Coast Guard to hold the Caribbean line more or less alone.

At the moment, the Coast Guard is also still staggering from what might fairly be called the fiscal-1988 budget debacle. The service's regular budget for fiscal 1987 was approximately two and a half billion dollars, and after nearly a hundred and thirty million dollars from the 1986 drug bill and a two-hundred-and-seventy-five-million-dollar contribution from Defense (anti-drug and Maritime Defense Zone funding) were added in, the total was close to three billion. By July of 1987, with the end of the fiscal year three months away, it was apparent that the same level of financing would not obtain in fiscal 1988. When the Administration published the Coast Guard's proposed budget appropriation, it was down two hundred million dollars from the previous year, and the House of Representatives proceeded to chop off a hundred and fifty million dollars from that, at the same time directing the service not to cut back its anti-drug effort. Not until the end of December—three months into the fiscal 1988 year—were the exact dimensions of the Coast Guard's shortfall clear. A month later, Admiral Yost announced that he was lacking a hundred million dollars in operating funds. To save money, the Coast Guard would close down nine search-and-rescue stations, fourteen marine-safety offices, and the Coast Guard Air Station in Chicago; the Vessel Traffic Service operations in New York and New Orleans were to be closed, and the operation in Valdez, Alaska, would be reduced in size; two icebreakers would be decommissioned immediately and a third mothballed; the Coast Guard shipyard, at Curtis Bay, Maryland, would begin an extended phasing out; and eleven hundred jobs would be eliminated, including two hundred and fifty in Coast Guard Headquarters units. In the long run, these economies were expected to save nearly fifty million dollars, but because the fiscal year was already partly over, and because vessels and bases (not to mention people) cannot be disposed of overnight, the bulk of the hundred-million-dollar reduction had to come from the service's operating account—specifically, from the part of it that pays for fuel, parts, supplies, maintenance, and training. The bottom line was that the service's entire spectrum of operations through the summer and fall of 1988 suffered heavily. Air patrols of fishing activity in the Bering Sea went from one a day to one a week; the monitoring of small-craft-construction safety virtually stopped; and patrols, including anti-drug patrols, were cut by half—just as the Reagan Administration was launching its new Zero Tolerance policy.

The cutbacks appear to have succeeded in drawing the attention of both Congress and the Administration. The service's fiscal-1989 appropriation, containing an additional two hundred million operating dollars, was passed by Congress and signed by President Reagan with relatively little fuss, and an additional hundred million dollars was forthcoming from the Omnibus Drug Act, along with fifty million dollars from the Department of Defense. At the same time, dissatisfaction with the Coast Guard's position in the Department of Transportation began to raise questions about the service's organizational future. Representative Robert W. Davis, of Michigan, put forward a bill to establish a Federal Maritime Administration within the Transportation Department. This administration, which would be headed by an Under-Secretary for Maritime Affairs and Readiness, would contain the Coast Guard and, from the Department of Commerce, some elements of the National Weather Service and the chartmaking and geodetic operations of the National Ocean Service. The rationale behind the new bill is essentially bureaucratic—the feeling that a civilian Under-Secretary would have better luck than an admiral when it came to wheeling and dealing within the Department of Transportation.



Other proposals, too, have recently surfaced, including suggestions that the Coast Guard be permanently affiliated with the Navy, that it be returned to the peacetime aegis of the Treasury, and, most radically, that it cut itself free from all entanglements and become an independent agency, joining some sixty that currently exist, among them NASA, the C.I.A., and the Tennessee Valley Authority. None of these schemes seem to have much chance of success, but they do suggest an increasing unhappiness with the affiliation that many Coast Guard officers feel has been a disaster.

On a deeper level, there is the matter of the service's conception of itself. Admiral Yost recognizes that not everyone shares his vision. "There's a concern because I've changed the culture in the Coast Guard," he admitted to me. But he clearly feels that he is merely changing it in a way that puts it closer to what it once was. "The culture has shifted since the Second World War, when the Coast Guard had a massive involvement," he went on. "We were in almost every theatre. We fought the war from the home port right over to the beaches, where we ran the landing craft. Everybody in the Coast Guard knew that we were in military service. Since then, that's kind of dwindled, and we got more jobs in oil pollution and enforcement of regulations on merchant ships, and we kind of drifted away. We wore uniforms, and we did military drills, but we kind of lost track that one part of us is a hard, professional killer. I'm changing that culture back, and I'm making every man and woman in the Coast Guard recognize that a big part of what they are is military personnel. That's giving some people a little trouble."

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and law enforcement, Admiral Yost lumps them together under the heading of safety of life at sea. "That's where my reputation is," he explained. "The Coast Guard is looked upon as probably the most professional and finest seagoing outfit in the world. We're experts at search and rescue, at putting in buoys and running lighthouses. If I lose that expertise—that's where I live, where my roots are—then the rest of it goes glimmering."

Yet the rest is what is clearly first in the Commandant's mind. "Those missions—running boats, running ships, flying airplanes, search and rescue, aids to navigation—are the key to everything I need to emphasize the other two missions," he told me. "As I'm now saying, it's no longer good enough for you to be the best search-and-rescue officer or enlisted man in the Coast Guard. It's no longer good enough for you to be one of the finest professional aids-to-navigation men I have. I've got a responsibility to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and if you can't support me in my wartime role then you're letting me down."

The Commandant's order of priorities has perhaps been most concisely reflected in the service's advertising slogan, "An Armed Service and More," on recruiting posters, where the old headline "The Life Savers" has been replaced by "The Law on the Sea," and in a new series of TV commercials that feature the actor Louis Gossett, Jr., who is perhaps best remembered as the ferocious sergeant in "An Officer and a Gentleman." But it may be that the Coast Guard, long known in Washington for its political ineptness, is swimming against the current. The Bush Administration seems likely to continue the retrenchment of defense spending already begun by its predecessor, and should it come to a scramble between the Navy and the Coast Guard for M.D.Z. funds the winner will not be hard to predict. The Coast Guard's prospects in the anti-drug war are not a great deal brighter. Under the Reagan Administration, the lavish funding (like the fight itself) was almost totally uncoördinated—though, of course, then Vice-President Bush was supposed to be in charge. In the confusion, the Coast Guard did surprisingly well against its former comrades from Customs, now arch-rivals. A junior player, the Drug Enforcement Agency, seems to be flex-

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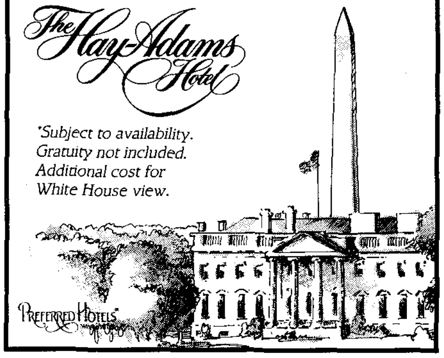

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ing its political muscle lately, but the organizational preference of the new anti-drug czar, William Bennett, will presumably not be revealed until he goes public with his program this coming September.

One may also argue that the Coast Guard's real long-range value lies in precisely those unromantic, persnickety missions that have, until the last few weeks, been receiving the least attention: conservation patrolling, icebreaking, ship-and-boat-construction safety, aids to navigation, search and rescue, and, particularly, anti-pollution work and ship-traffic control. It is not yet clear whether the service reductions caused by the fiscal-1988 budget crunch were a factor in the Valdez oil spill, or whether stringent traffic controls (common for years in crowded European waters) might have averted the other recent spills. Congress and the public do, however, seem to be increasingly interested in extending governmental control of activity along the nation's coast; in California, for example, a move to reduce tanker traffic in the oil-well-studded Santa Barbara Channel is being spearheaded by the local representative, Republican Robert Lagomarsino, with support from across the political spectrum—and clear misgivings from the Coast Guard.

Even when the service appears to be getting money, the reality may be quite different. Secretary of Transportation Samuel Skinner recently requested a twenty-five-dollar "user fee" ("tax" is still a forbidden word in the Bush Administration) to be applied to every boat on American waters; the expected hundred and eighty million dollars thus generated would, he says, go toward the cost of operating the Coast Guard. But in fact the receipts would vanish into the general treasury, and nothing would be added to the Coast Guard's budget.

In fiscal 1988, the Coast Guard's financial shortage finally became so severe that one wag suggested that the service might have to change its official motto from "Semper Paratus" to "Semi Paratus." The modest increase in its appropriation for fiscal 1989 staved off operational paralysis—even permitted the reopening of a few of the stations closed last year—but there seems nothing on the horizon that will challenge a bleak assessment that was given me when I first arrived at Sandy Hook. The deputy group commander there, a Coast Guard Academy graduate, said, "The first thing you learn when you join this service is that there's never enough—never enough money, never enough men, and never enough time."

—TONY GIBBS

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At the sweating walls, and down at the tiled floor
In the cubicle next to mine something is moaning
A tough old bird is wheeled in on a gurney
And hidden behind a curtain

Now looking up I see a border of faces
Intent on a part of me beyond my view
They are nodding and muttering to one another
Poets have died before in this drafty ward
Among the diseased and the damaged

Outside in the street a purple dusk is falling
Someone is waiting in the cold corridor
For news of the accident (there is no news)
I could cry out, but instead I lie here suspended
Waiting for pain, for the reappearance of pain

—CONSTANCE URDANG

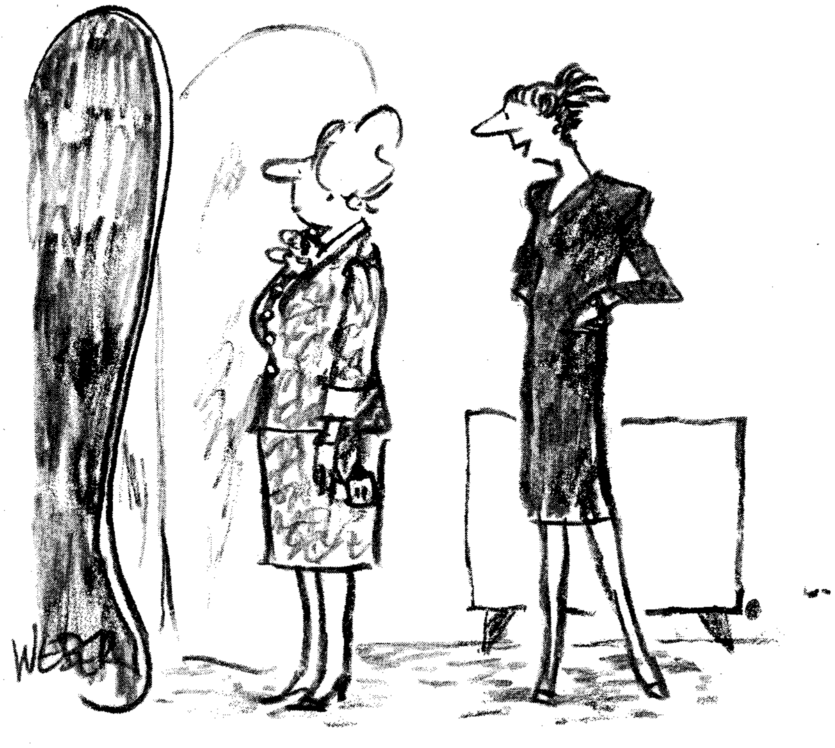
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Lies, Lies, and More Lies

Steven Soderbergh's "sex, lies, and videotape" (all lowercase, like "thirtysomething") is a smooth, handsome first feature whose major distinction is that it generates a fair degree of psychological tension out of next to nothing. It's just a triangle drama with a cunning little kink in it—a twist that turns out to be far less daring than it seems. The triangle consists of Ann (Andie MacDowell), a beautiful young Southern woman who, as she tells her therapist, has "never really been that much into sex"; her husband, John (Peter Gallagher), a sleazy yuppie lawyer who is very much into it; and her younger sister, Cynthia (Laura San Giacomo), who compensates for Ann's frigidity by hopping into bed with John whenever he can cancel his afternoon appointments. The kink is an old college pal of John's, named Graham (James Spader), a soft-spoken drifter who arrives in town bearing mystery, a trunkful of videos, and an intense but puzzling sense of purpose. The dramatic purpose of this enigmatic stranger couldn't be much clearer, though. His presence is meant to disturb the static situation he has dropped into—to introduce a volatile, unstable element into this toxic compound of relationships. He has come to town to change everybody's life.

Not that Graham could ever be confused with the Music Man; he's not exactly strutting down Main Street singing "Ya got trouble." After confessing to Ann that he's impotent except when he's by himself, he spends a good deal of his time sitting quietly, in the nude, in front of his TV set and watching one of his dozens of home videos—all of them interviews he has conducted with women about sex. Both sisters are attracted to him despite, or maybe because of, his sexual oddities; his peculiar blend of passivity, self-absorption, and candor makes him quite a tease. (Also, Spader bats his eyes, fidgets, and stumbles over his words a lot—presumably in an effort to seem endearingly damaged. His painfully deliberate performance is like a somnambulist's parody of Diane Keaton.) Soderbergh provides a fancy explanation of his character's sexual alienation: Graham says that his relations with women convinced him that he was a pathological liar, and that the only way for him to stay honest is to avoid sex—he compares himself with a recovering alcoholic. Ann, his soul mate in repression, buys this. But the movie treats Graham's celibacy as a kind of deluded but heroic idealism, and thus makes the recovering-alcoholic analogy seem sloppy, imprecise. The real model for this character is the retired gunslinger of mythic Westerns, the laconic hombre who won't pull his artillery out of its holster because he's seen too much killin' already. Graham is Shane—a man trying to stay peaceable while everyone's urging him to load up his pistol and do what a man's gotta do.

Finally, he does—discreetly, with both his video camera and Soderbergh's movie camera turned off—and everything in this little community of sexual homesteaders is made right. Honesty prevails, duplicity is punished, people find out who they really are. For all the movie's surface sophistication, it's as simple as a fairy tale and as naïve as one of those Cassavetes pictures in which everybody faces up to the truth about himself. (Soderbergh, who's twenty-six, has absorbed quite a few influences: Godard and Rohmer are in here somewhere, too, and the opening shot is lifted from Gillian Armstrong's "High Tide.") After the drama has played itself out, all we're left with, intellectually, is a very dubious old adage, "Honesty is the best policy," and a pop-psychology truism, "Get in touch with your feelings." It isn't a smug movie, though. Soderbergh's combination of slick, eclectic technique and simplistic philosophy doesn't feel as phony as it probably should; in some barely comprehensible way, it seems like a personal style. Nobody would transplant the problems of Cassavetes' middle-aged hypocrites and burnouts to a group of attractive young people out of expediency; nobody would remake "Shane" as a Southern psychodrama just to show off. There's real conviction in "sex, lies, and videotape," a mixed-up fervor that keeps us watching even while we're thinking, Come off it. And early in the movie—before it turns into an encounter session—Soderbergh displays a talent for comedy, especially in the scenes featuring San Giacomo, who drawls a good dozen perfectly timed put-down lines, with killing glares to go with them. The film has its oddball seductiveness, but, let's be honest, it's too earnest and wrapped up in itself to be very satisfying. When Soderbergh relaxes the tension and releases his big ideas, they



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come out stale and musty, as if they'd been bottled up too long.

SODERBERGH is apparently quite an object of desire in Hollywood right now. Producers and studio executives have been courting him since the movie's première, at the independents-only United States Film Festival, in Park City, Utah, last January: they lusted to acquire this young talent even before "sex, lies, and videotape" won its surprising Best Film award at Cannes. Maybe the studio types identify with recovering pathological liars; on the evidence, though, their own recoveries aren't going too well. Their movies about love and sex turn out to be about "relationships." When they make what they proudly describe as an adult picture, they still treat the audience like schoolchildren: they lead us by the hand from class to class and make sure we've learned our lessons well before we go home. They make movies, that is, as helplessly false as "When Harry Met Sally . . ."

Rob Reiner's movie, from a script by Nora Ephron (who wrote "Heartburn"), takes a screwball-comedy idea and inflates it like a rubber raft—a life-style raft. Harry (Billy Crystal) and Sally (Meg Ryan) meet at the University of Chicago in the late seventies, rub each other the wrong way in traditional romantic-comedy fashion, bump into each other a couple of times in the next few years, and then, after breaking up with their partners, become close friends—New York-style companions in misery, consoling themselves for their lack of significant others. The movie keeps them out of each other's arms by conducting a running debate on the lofty philosophical question "Can a man and a woman ever be just friends, without sex getting in the way?"

It's a Rohmer movie played as a sitcom. To keep us busy while we wait for Harry and Sally to figure out that they're in love, Reiner and Ephron simply string together bits of shtick. The debate, of course, is too shallow to engage us, but they might have tried providing a little plot. Screwball comedies used to give the audience at least the pleasure of appreciating the intricate machinery of farce, of following the ingenious contrivances that keep the lovers apart and then miraculously unite them. That, however, would require the filmmakers to own up to the artificiality of what they're doing; they would have to stop pretending to be real and truthful and universal. They settle for a sly compromise between realism and hokum: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." positions itself comfortably out in the middle of nowhere and casts knowing glances in all directions.

The movie's self-satisfaction and its indifference to screwball craft reach a kind of simultaneous peak in the big comic showpiece, a scene in which Sally, sitting with Harry in a crowded deli, gives him an exuberantly realistic demonstration of how women fake orgasms. Ryan moans awfully convincingly, really throws herself into it, but to find the scene uproarious you have to forget everything the picture has told us about the character. She's neat, controlled, primly self-confident, a bit of a goody-goody, so what little personality she has been given is violated by this unembarrassed public performance. And the movie, having elicited a suitably "contemporary" belly laugh, just hops the local to the next stop.

Rob Reiner was a better director when he wasn't trying to dispense rueful wisdom. His first movie, "This Is Spinal Tap," a comic mock-documentary about a heavy-metal band, was a funny, completely disposable entertainment: no more than a lively improv sketch extended to feature length—and proud of it. But the success of "Stand by Me," a wet exercise in nostalgia and male bonding that became the sleeper hit of 1986, may have ruined him: he seems determined now to *touch* the audience rather than merely tickle it. In "When Harry Met Sally . . ." he runs after us with outstretched arms, but he's losing his touch with actors, which was his best quality as a director. Crystal muddles through amiably by using his standup comic's skill to make the lines sound brighter than they are and by not worrying too much about plunging into his character. (He would just hit his head on the bottom of the pool anyway.) But Ryan, who's usually proficient and appealing, has been left to flounder. Reiner and Ephron give her impossible, unplayable stuff—a comic crying jag, a handful of Mary Tyler Moore-like moments of cute irritability—and all she can do is be adorable. She's good at that, but without any more to her character her personal charm wears off. "When

Harry Met Sally . . ." is Hollywood sincerity in its purest form: it reaches out and touches itself.

IT would be pointless to dwell on Ron Howard's "Parenthood," another ruefully wise "adult" comedy by a once promising young director. The script (by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel) is ambitiously constructed, tracing the relationships of several boomer-age parents with their kids, their siblings, and their own parents. The advantage of this arrangement is that none of the characters are onscreen very long: we have time to get sick of only about half of them, and some—especially the nervous, eager dad played by Steve Martin—are fun to watch. (Howard has assembled a first-rate cast, at least, including Mary Steenburgen, Rick Moranis, Dianne Wiest, Jason Robards, Harley Kozak, Martha Plimpton, Keanu Reeves, and Tom Hulce. They all work hard at giving some life to the movie's schematic characters, and only Hulce fails completely.) The drawback is that the movie has no drive: we're not panting for something to be consummated. The dull title captures the tone of the movie precisely. The whole thing has been conceived generically, abstractly, and by the end the filmmakers are rushing from scene to scene tidying up loose ends, to make sure that each little individual drama gets its point across unmistakably and that they all add up to a correct answer to the essay question "What is parenthood?" The mini-homilies consist of such startling bits of advice as "Give your kids some room" and "Watch out or you'll repeat your parents' mistakes." Perhaps realizing that these messages are on the forlorn side, the writers finally uncork a large, juicy metaphor that will cover everything. Life, we learn, can be either a smooth, uneventful ride on a merry-go-round or a scary, exhilarating one on a roller coaster. The roller coaster, says "Parenthood," is better—less soothing but more rewarding, because you aren't just going around in circles. This metaphor reveals perhaps more than the filmmakers know about the nature of Hollywood-style wisdom. Whether we're on the merry-go-round or the roller coaster, when we get off the ride we're still in the amusement park—we haven't really gone anywhere at all.

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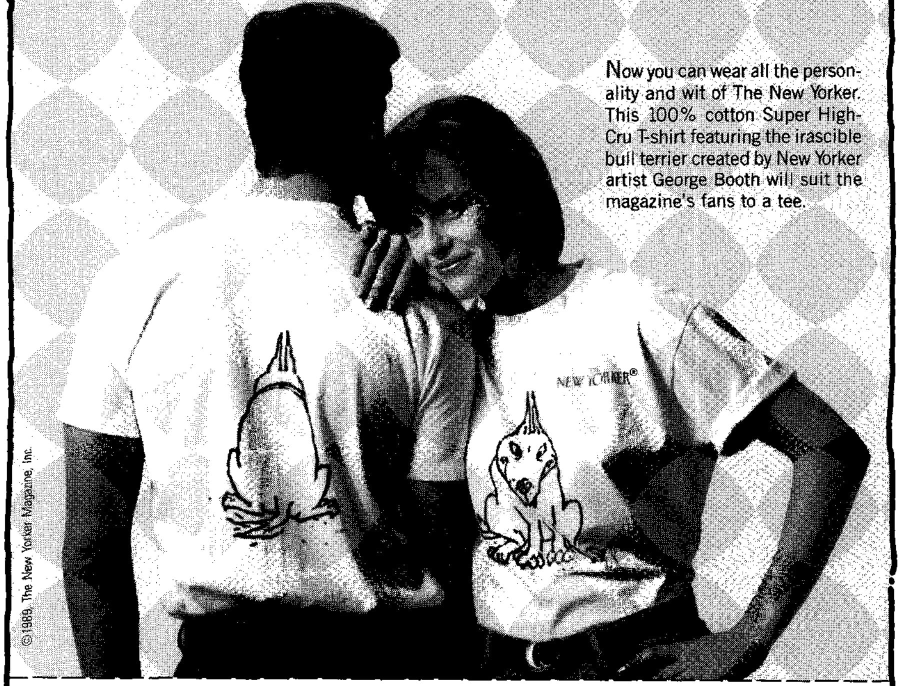

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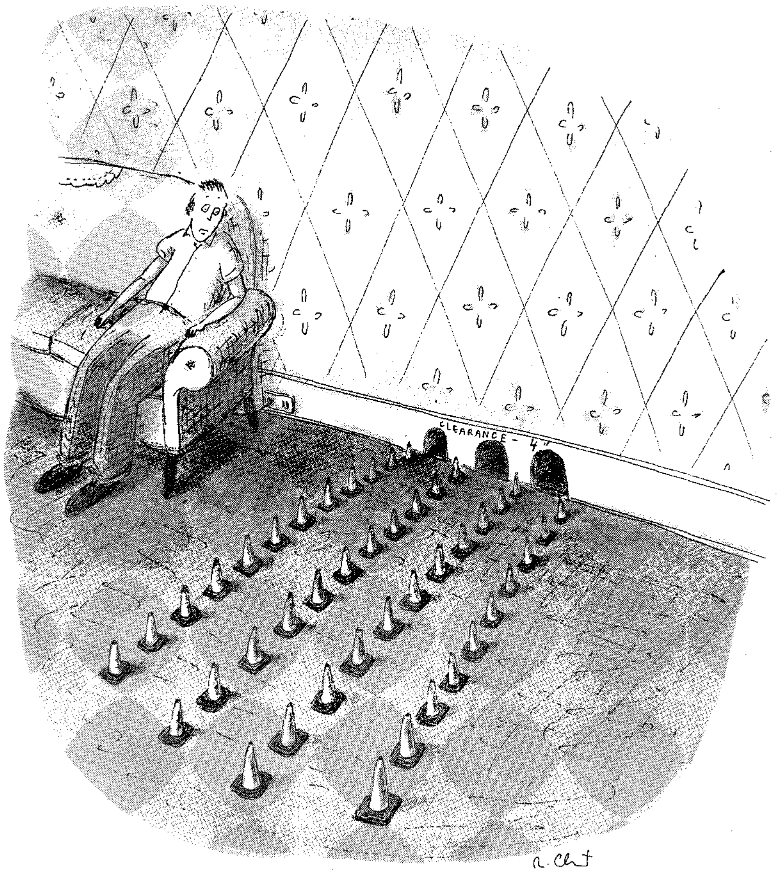
WHEN William Farley was selling encyclopedias door-to-door back in the mid-sixties, he would write in his notebook, over and over, "I will be rich." During the next twenty years or so, he refined that general ambition, continually setting and resetting his sights, no sooner achieving one goal than fixing on the next: he would own a billion-dollar company; he would become chairman and owner of a Fortune 500 company; he would create (through acquisition) one of the largest companies in this country; he would own businesses with revenues of five billion dollars by 1990. Most of his goals he has achieved, and, with his recent acquisition—following a long, bruising takeover struggle—of West Point–Pepperell, a premier textile-and-apparel manufacturer, he seems to be at least close to reaching that five-billion-dollar mark by 1990.

Not all this empire building, however, has been accomplished on the strength of Farley's own firepower. While his ambitions were always grand, it was only in the last five years, and with the munificent backing of the junk-bond impresario Michael Milken and his firm, Drexel Burnham Lambert, that Farley was launched into that stratospheric layer of American corporate life in which he had visualized himself so intently for so long. Farley, in fact, has been one of the leading practitioners of the dominant financial phenomenon of the eighties: the leveraging of corporate America, the pandemic substitution of debt for equity on corporations' balance sheets, which has been facilitated by a vastly expanded junk-bond market. While Farley, through a succession of leveraged buyouts, or LBOs, does preside today over an empire with combined revenues of roughly four billion dollars, that empire also has a more than equivalent amount of debt—about four and a half billion dollars—with interest charges of over one and a half million dollars a day.

Farley does not see himself as a creature of the times, a singularly lucky historical accident. He sees himself, rather, as someone who has set extraordinary goals and, through a combination of tenacity, intuition, guts, acumen, and what he calls "imaging" (that is, visualizing success), achieved them. Having come so far so fast—he made his first investment, of twenty-five thousand dollars, just thirteen years ago—he is persuaded that no goal is beyond his reach. "If you can conceive it, you can achieve it," he told me not long ago. Thus, perhaps inevitably, Farley now aims to be President of the United States. (To that end, he campaigned briefly for the Democratic Presidential nomination in the fall of 1987, mostly in Iowa; he withdrew before the Iowa primary, but he now looks upon that experience as a useful primer.)

It is said that several years ago, when Farley first began to voice his Presidential aspirations, a friend asked him why he wanted to be President, and he replied, "Because I've done everything else." Someone who has been close to Farley for years recently remarked to me, "His desire didn't spring from convictions, or ideas about ways in which he wanted to change the world. He was approaching it like another deal—an LBO of the Presidency."

FARLEY burst upon the business scene in 1985, with a $1.4 billion buyout of Northwest Industries, a Fortune 500 conglomerate, and he followed that with an even greater coup last February—the acquisition, for three billion dollars, of West Point–Pepperell. Many people in the business community—particularly in Chicago, where Farley lives, and where Farley, Inc., the holding company for most of his businesses, is based—view him as an unproven upstart, someone who "fell out of the sky," in the words of one Chicagoan. Farley bristles at this characterization. "It's like Johnny Carson," he said. "For years, he was practicing, gaining experience, and people didn't know who he was. But all those years when no one knew him was he just a regular comedian or was he something special, different? Well, I've been in business since 1969—all those years, working, learning. And now people say, 'Bill Farley has really made it in the last few years.' "



Farley, who likes to emphasize the Horatio Alger elements in his life story (and, indeed, he was given an award by the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans in 1986), is the son of a mailman and a funeral-home receptionist, and grew up in a working-class neighborhood in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. After graduating from Bowdoin College and Boston College Law School, and working for eighteen months as an encyclopedia salesman, he joined the mergers-and-acquisitions (M. & A.) department of NL Industries, a chemicals-and-metals company, in New York, in 1969. "I realized in my second year at NL, when I was twenty-nine, that I could become head of the company," he told me, "but I didn't want to wait twenty years." In 1971, Farley left New York for Chicago, to become the regional manager of Midwest operations of NL Industries' metals group. Ilan Kaufthal, now the director of the M. & A. department at the investment-banking firm Wertheim Schroder, had worked with Farley at NL, and he recently recalled, "Bill was a charming guy with the gift of gab who always had the quality of thinking beyond where he was—a vision of where he was going to be five years from then that was always far beyond what anyone else expected. At NL, others were looking at the nitty-gritty of deals, but he said he wanted to get experience on the industrial side, so he was going to the metals division, in the Midwest. I didn't understand what he was talking about. To leave New York, where the action was, to go to some dirty metals business in the Midwest . . ."

After a year and a half in the metals division, Farley moved on to the élite investment-banking firm of Lehman Brothers in Chicago, and there he gained more experience on the financial side of M. & A. He estimated how long it would take him to attain a senior position there, came up with the figure ten years, and soon decided to branch out on his own. Accordingly, in 1976, even before he left Lehman, he did his first acquisition: an LBO (in those days, the term for such a transaction was not LBO but "bootstrap deal") of a pectin-producing company, Anaheim Citrus. The seller was his old employer NL Industries, and the price was $1.7 million. "I went around to five or six institutions—there was no junk-bond market in those days—and the investors said, 'We will do it if you put two hundred thousand dollars in,'" Farley recalled. "Well, I didn't have two hundred thousand dollars, but I couldn't say that." Farley only had twenty-five thousand, which he contributed; the rest he borrowed from four different banks. That deal became Farley's template. The ratio of debt to equity was high (about seven to one), though not quite as high as in his later deals (ten to one), and—as has been true over and over in Farley deals—most of what was called equity (the two hundred thousand dollars) was borrowed.

Taking advantage of the fact that Anaheim Citrus produced roughly forty per cent of the world supply of pectin peel, Farley raised prices and doubled production, and profits increased dramatically. Within a year, he said, he was able to repay his personal loans of a hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. He then bought his second company, Baumfolder, Inc., which was a graphic-arts division of Bell & Howell. Baumfolder cost six million dollars; Farley put in five hundred thousand dollars in cash and the proceeds from a five-hundred-thousand-dollar personal loan. This acquisition, however, nearly drove him into bankruptcy. According to Farley, the prior management had doctored the company's books to make it seem that the company had earned five hundred thousand dollars the previous year, whereas it had actually lost that amount. Farley asked for the banks' forbearance; moved from Chicago to Sidney, Ohio, where the company was situated; fired the existing management; learned the business, department by department; and by 1981 had succeeded in turning the company around. (Indeed, within less than ten years of acquiring Anaheim Citrus and Baumfolder, Farley would sell both companies for about ten million dollars each.) In the early eighties, Farley did a couple of other small deals, investing in a coal mine and a health-food-distribution company; the first failed and the second did not do well.

Farley's first sizable deal was the acquisition, for a hundred and twenty-six million dollars, of NL Industries' metals division. The division consisted of six or seven businesses that manufactured parts for the auto industry, and because in 1981 that industry was

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in a steep decline executives at NL decided to sell the division. "Bill had not done anything of significance before, but he exploited his relationship with us to get a shot at the deal," I was told by Kaufthal, who had handled the sale at NL. "I gave him the information more out of friendship than anything else—and then, lo and behold, he produced the highest bid."

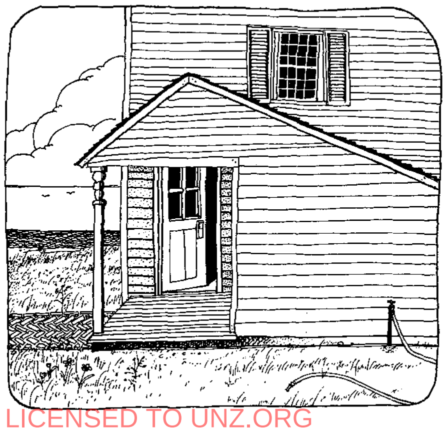
Shortly after Farley took over, in 1982, the largest of the metals businesses, a manufacturer of die-cast parts named Doehler-Jarvis, enjoyed a windfall. The Ford Motor Company, which had done the majority of its die-casting in-house, decided to close its operation and buy nearly all its supply from Doehler-Jarvis. That single event caused Doehler-Jarvis's sales and profits to soar, and some of Farley's critics argue that the event is good evidence that Farley owes his success largely to luck. But Kaufthal pointed out, "Buying Doehler-Jarvis when he did was like deciding to go into the oil business when it seems to be at bottom and then it starts going down again. Others walked away from this deal, but Bill stayed in. He flew in the face of conventional wisdom and he put everything he had on the line. How many people who are worth two million dollars would put their two million dollars into something that everybody says is a terrible business? He has the ability to have big convictions and to act on them."

In 1984, Farley acted on his convictions again, in waging his first hostile struggle—for a small defense contractor, Condec—and ultimately winning the company by bidding more than its chairman did. Farley bought Condec for a hundred and thirty-five million dollars, with ten million dollars in equity. But this deal was a debacle. Most of the management people either were fired or chose to leave, and Farley and his staff apparently suffered from their own inexperience. "We lost a bundle on one bid," a Farley associate told me. "We bid so low that we barely covered the cost of the raw material, and it put the company into a major deficit." Condec ceased to operate last year, by which time it had lost over a hundred million dollars.

BY 1985, then, Farley had established himself as a journeyman entrepreneur. He had parlayed business connections, affability, and mainly borrowed money into some medium-sized deals. He had exhibited an appetite for risk, and a readiness to trust his own instincts rather than the prevailing wisdom. He had on occasion been proved right. He had also been proved wrong. He had not been put out of business by his mistakes, but neither had his successes garnered him recognition in the business world. He owned some decent industrial companies—most notably Doehler-Jarvis, the die-casting concern—but they were, as one Chicago businessman has put it, "invisible."

It was being selected by Drexel's Michael Milken that raised Farley from obscurity. Since 1977, Drexel had been underwriting junk bonds for small and medium-sized companies that were not "investment grade," and so had previously been denied access to the corporate bond market. By virtually creating a non-investment-grade, or junk, bond market, Milken gave these companies access to capital which they would not otherwise have had. All they had to do was pay a far higher interest rate than investment-grade issuers, to compensate the junk-bond buyers for their added risk. In 1984, Milken and his colleagues at Drexel decided that they would begin underwriting these bonds not only for middling companies' general corporate purposes but also for entrepreneurs who wanted to mount hostile takeovers and leveraged buyouts—a move that would enable both Drexel and its clients, the have-nots of American business life, to break into the élite, highly lucrative M. & A. world. Milken, it soon developed, could raise money for almost anyone, in almost any amount, so strong and so eager was the network of junk-bond buyers whom he had cultivated since the late seventies.

Accordingly, he began to create "war chests"—of fifty million dollars, sixty million dollars, a hundred million dollars—for a handful of individuals who were willing and, in his view, able corporate raiders. From these individuals he exacted high fees and, generally, substantial equity stakes in whatever companies he enabled them to acquire. The equity stakes, of course, were a means for Milken not only to amass wealth but also to maintain a measure of control over his chosen acquirers. By early 1985, Milken and Drexel had provided many millions of dollars of ready cash, or "hunting capital," to Carl Icahn (who with Drexel financing acquired T.W.A.), Ronald Perelman (who similarly acquired Revlon), Nelson Peltz (who similarly acquired National Can), and Bill Farley.



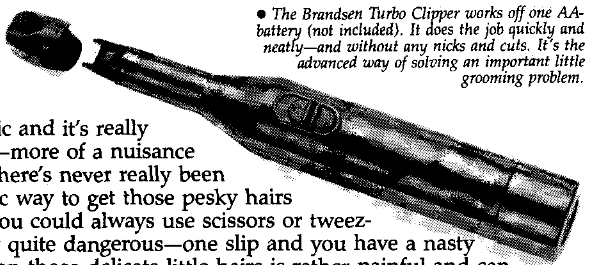
Thus was Farley permitted to lift his sights from companies in the hundred-million-dollar range to those whose purchase price was over a billion dollars. In 1985, Ben Heineman, one of the pillars of the small, insular Chicago business establishment, had agreed to a buyout of Northwest Industries—a conglomerate that he had pieced together over decades—by Donald Kelly, the former chairman of Esmark, who was another well-respected Chicago veteran. But Kelly—who was not allied with Drexel—could not raise the financing. Farley approached Heineman with a buyout offer, but Heineman had never heard of him, did not believe that he could raise the money, and was not particularly eager to sell Northwest to him. Within several weeks, Milken had raised the junk-bond portion of the financing, enabling Farley to offer $1.4 billion for the company; and since there was no contender at that price Farley's deal was accomplished. This Milken magic-making, however, came at the usual cost, above and beyond the princely fees: a Drexel investment banker took his place on the Farley companies' boards of directors, and Drexel acquired its equity stake. Today, Drexel owns 13.9 per cent of Fruit of the Loom, the successor company to Northwest, and about twelve to thirteen per cent of Farley, Inc.

Not only did this deal convert Farley overnight into a ranking corporate player but it also produced one of the most stunning business successes of his career. After his buyout, Farley sold off the non-apparel businesses of Northwest at generally good prices and kept Union Underwear, which is now called Fruit of the Loom. Instead of paying off the bulk of his acquisition debt with the proceeds from the divisions he sold, Farley invested heavily in Fruit of the Loom; he first took the company public, to raise more capital, and then refinanced virtually all the acquisition debt.

His pumping of capital into the company was, of course, dramatically at odds with the stereotypical LBO, in which newly acquired companies are starved of growth capital in order to service their debt. In this instance, the reverse occurred. From 1983 to 1985, Northwest Industries' largest subsidiary, Lone Star Steel, had had declining earnings; Union Underwear had been tapped as the principal cash-generator for Northwest, and Union's own expansion had thus been stymied. When Farley took it over and began his infusion of cash, the company responded all the more dramatically for having been so deprived. Sales at Fruit of the Loom have risen from five hundred and seventy-four million dollars in 1985 to slightly over a billion dollars last year, while operating earnings rose from a hundred and twenty million dollars to two hundred million dollars.

For this success, Farley makes a bow in the direction of John Holland, Fruit of the Loom's chairman and C.E.O., who is widely reputed to be an excellent manager, has been at the company for nearly thirty years and its C.E.O. since 1975, and has kept his management team intact since Farley took over. But Farley claims credit for having brought new energy and a new vision to the company; for having accelerated its move into new, highly successful product areas; for having reshaped its marketing campaigns; and, of course, for having had the courage to invest heavily in the company and therefore continue living with a mountain of debt. Fruit of the Loom's debt now—over a billion dollars—is nearly as high as it was after Farley took over the company.

THERE is no more striking foil to Farley, avatar that he is of the "roaring eighties," than his adversary in his recent hostile-takeover struggle for West Point–Pepperell—Joseph Lanier, Jr., that company's erstwhile chairman and C.E.O. The West Point Manufacturing Company was started by Lanier's great-grandfather LaFay-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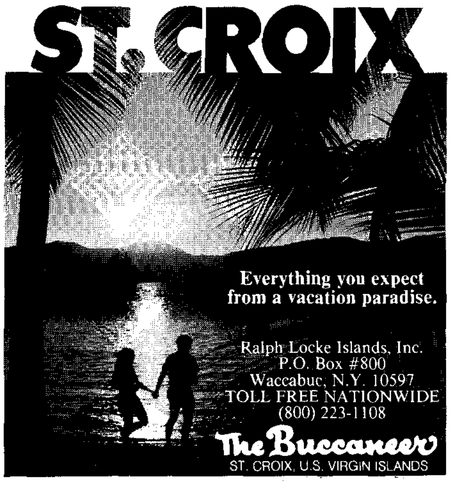

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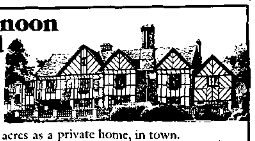

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ette Lanier, in 1880, and its stewardship had passed through each generation.

Dominating a region along the Chattahoochee River known as "the Valley," which comprises six towns in eastern Alabama and western Georgia, West Point has been a paragon of Deep South paternalism. The Lanier family's use of armed guards to seal off the Valley from union organizers in the thirties and protect its mills from the strikes going on elsewhere is a legend in the textile industry. Ever since the turn of the century, the company built many of the Valley's homes (most of which it sold to employees in the nineteen-fifties), as well as its schools and libraries, gymnasiums and community halls, and West Point also contributed to the building of scores of churches and the area's major hospital. The Lanier family took special pride in the tradition of West Point's Fifty-Year Club, consisting of employees (four hundred and twenty-six of them over the years) who have worked for the company that long.

While Joseph Lanier, Jr., received the leadership of West Point as his legacy—a tradition that is now virtually obsolete in public companies, most having passed from the founders and their descendants to outside managers—he was hardly an archaic figurehead: the company grew from five hundred and twenty-six million dollars in sales in 1975, when he became chairman, to $2.2 billion in September, 1988, the month before Farley made his bid. Thomas Mendell, a partner in the investment-banking firm of Goldman, Sachs, who has known Lanier for many years, and who represented West Point–Pepperell in its effort to resist Farley, said, "Joe Lanier is a favorite person of mine. He is a smart man who doesn't wear it on his sleeve. He is well respected within the industry as an excellent manager, and he put together one of the best apparel-and-textile companies in the country."

The quintessential gracious Southerner, Lanier was nonetheless well versed in unfriendly acquisition. About two years ago, he began discussing with his investment bankers his interest in the textile company J. P. Stevens. He was hungry for its branded consumer products, like Laura Ashley and Ralph Lauren, yet he was not willing to mount a hostile raid. Then, in early 1988, Whitney Stevens, the scion of another family, which had run that company for generations, made a bid to take J. P. Stevens private, but the market viewed his bid as far too low, and the company was put into play. At that point, Lanier made a bid, reasoning that Stevens had started the process himself by bidding too low, and that the company was going to be sold—if not to West Point–Pepperell, then to someone else. Lanier acquired Stevens in May, and felt he had thereby positioned his company for a dramatic surge in market share. However, because he had made a "hold separate" agreement with the Federal Trade Commission, he was unable to combine the two companies' operations until mid-December of that year.

By then, he was fighting for his life—or so he felt—against Farley. In October, Farley had made an all-cash tender offer, of forty-eight dollars a share, for the company; its board of directors had urged shareholders to reject the offer; and the parties had sued one another in federal court. West Point–Pepperell was lobbying for state anti-takeover legislation in Georgia. The Valley, meanwhile, was seized by a collective trauma. Angry employees held rallies, and set fire to Fruit of the Loom underwear; and Lanier, at one point, vowed to fight Farley "until hell freezes over—and then we are going to fight him on the ice."

Farley was unfazed. Indeed, he is so persuaded of his charismatic power that he thought it might work on Lanier. "I wanted to meet him, and he was ignoring me," Farley told me. "So I showed up at his deposition. I did it on intuition. I really wanted to do a friendly deal. I was hoping that I could get a chance to speak with him personally, deal on a more cordial basis than in the newspapers." Lanier's lawyers would not let Farley near their client, so when Lanier went to the rest room during a break Farley followed him. "I said, 'I'm delighted to meet you. Glad to have this opportunity to say hello,' " Farley recalled. "He said, 'I wish I could say the same.' " That ended their exchange.

One of the more interesting claims

that West Point–Pepperell raised in federal court was that Farley was violating the margin regulations—regulations, imposed by the Federal Reserve, that allow an acquirer to use the stock of the targeted company to secure no more than fifty per cent of the borrowings needed to accomplish the acquisition. Farley was borrowing almost half of his acquisition financing from banks, to be secured by West Point–Pepperell stock, but he was raising additional funds through what his tender-offer document referred to as "increasing rate redeemable preferred stock," which West Point–Pepperell claimed was really short-term debt "dressed up to look like equity in order to evade the margin regulations." Furthermore, Farley planned to raise the remainder of his financing in junk bonds, backed by a guaranty from Farley, Inc. West Point argued that the guaranty was worthless and therefore those bonds were in reality backed by West Point stock—backing that would put Farley over the margin regulations' fifty-per-cent limit.

Burton Malkiel, a Princeton University economics professor, stated in an affidavit submitted to the court that the Farley, Inc., guaranty was worthless because Farley, Inc., had a negative net worth of seventy-three million dollars; because its liquidity position was precarious, in that if it had to quickly convert assets into cash it would have only seventy-nine cents for every dollar of current liability; because it had been losing money from operations; and because its cash flow was negative. (One of the major points considered by a lender in a highly leveraged financing is the availability of a strong cash flow, to pay the interest on the debt.) In sum, the earnings and cash flow of Farley, Inc., were inadequate to cover its existing debt, let alone support an increase of many hundreds of millions of dollars. Thus, Malkiel argued, it was the West Point–Pepperell stock that was the true security for the financing of this transaction, and the "preferred stock" and the "guaranty" were mere subterfuges.

In conclusion, Malkiel stated, "A takeover of an operating and profitable corporation like West Point which is propped up on what would appear to be more than ninety-per-cent debt can, if the practice continues and becomes even more widespread, push equity prices to unsustainable heights, inter-

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Judge G. Ernest Tidwell, of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, found that Farley, Inc.,'s "financing is substantially suspect and may be a violation of the margin requirements," but he held that only the regulatory authorities—not the West Point–Pepperell directors—had the standing to raise the issue. This effectively bounced the issue to the Federal Reserve and the Securities and Exchange Commission, but both agencies had consistently declined to intercede to enforce these regulations during battles for corporate control, and they did not break with their tradition here.

"The margin regulations have become the vestigial organ of the law," Kenneth Forrest, a partner at the law firm of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, who argued West Point's margin claims in court, commented recently. He emphasized the point that in recent months some members of Congress have shown a desire to pass legislation that would slow highly leveraged transactions but have had trouble formulating such legislation, and that although the margin regulations, already in existence, could do just that, they go unenforced.

The West Point–Pepperell defenders were well aware that their chances of prevailing against an all-cash tender offer for all outstanding shares, such as Farley's, were slim. What they were really seeking through all their maneuvers, therefore, was not so much outright victory as delay. They hoped that if they could drag the process out, Drexel and Milken would be indicted on charges of securities fraud—press reports in November were declaring such a move imminent—and Drexel would lose its ability to finance the Farley offer. The indictments, the lawyers reasoned, might also cause a panic and break in the junk-bond market, which would make it impossible for any other investment-banking firm to underwrite the bonds. As it turned out, Drexel, in December, agreed in principle to plead guilty to six felony counts, and Milken, in March, 1989, was indicted on ninety-eight counts, but the junk-bond market generally held steady. These events may well have strengthened Drexel's commitment to perform, and so show the world that its money-raising power was intact.

By February, when it was clear to the West Point–Pepperell directors that, with a proxy contest approaching, the company could not remain independent, it was put up for auction. Farley, who had first bid forty-eight dollars per share, in October, 1988, ended up paying fifty-eight dollars—an increase of about three hundred million dollars. Another bidder was Merrill Lynch Capital Partners, the LBO fund of Merrill Lynch, which had been advising West Point–Pepperell but had now changed hats. Lanier would have continued to run the company had Merrill Lynch won, but it could not match Farley's price. As he had done during his Condec acquisition, Farley outbid management, which must have known the company's strengths and weaknesses better. A member of the Merrill group commented, "We assumed that we would sell off some pieces of the company, at good prices; that we would increase the profitability of the bed and bath"—sheets and towels—"divisions; that we would have drastically reduced capital investment; and still we could not do it. And *we* were emotionally involved."

In the view of people who worked on this deal from sides other than Farley's, the following events must occur if his deal is to succeed: he must sell off pieces of the company at spectacular prices, to pay back $1.3 billion of bank debt, and he must do this in two years or less; he must increase sales and operating margins of profitability by cutting into others' market share; and he must continue to enjoy, as all his leveraged endeavors have for the past seven years, a recession-free economy.

"Farley was driven by different devils—I believe that he *had* to do this deal, at any price, that it was a lifeline for him," one individual from the Merrill bidding group declared, echoing a view widely held among the West Point–Pepperell defenders.

FARLEY was indeed under inordinate pressure to make an acquisition. He had set the clock running in February, 1988, when Farley, Inc., issued, through Drexel, five hundred million dollars of assorted junk bonds. As the offering prospectus blithely announced, there was "no specific use" for the "majority of proceeds." There was a "blind pool"—a Milken invention, an expansion of those early war chests—of roughly three hundred million dollars, earmarked for whatever acquisition might strike the issuer's fancy. The bond buyers, in other words, bought the bonds not on the basis of the ability of Farley, Inc., to meet the principal and interest payments, because over time it could not; and not on the basis of the projected earnings of any specific company that it was acquiring, because there was none; but on faith—faith in Farley's acquisitive talents, or, more likely (since that record was spot-

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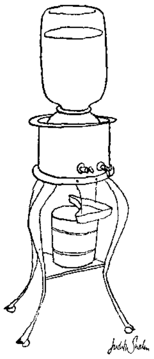
ty), in the Farley-Drexel combination.

The bonds were issued at interest rates of 14.6 and 15.6 per cent. That was, of course, very expensive money: its debt service for a year was close to eighty million dollars. And though Farley might have invested some portion of it in other junk bonds—with a yield as high as the interest rates he had to pay on his bonds—he would have been risking his principal in such investments. To the extent that he invested in less risky instruments, he would have had a negative carrying charge—the spread between the interest rates he was paying and the interest rate he was receiving.



While roughly three hundred million dollars of the debt issue was future-oriented—that is, most of this blind-pool debt was transmogrified, in the long-standing Farley tradition, into the "equity" of the West Point-Pepperell deal—the two hundred million dollars or so remaining dealt with the past. Farley, Inc., had some preferred stock that was coming due for redemption. Condec was in default for nonpayment of principal and interest on thirty-five and a half million dollars in bonds, and some irate bondholders were threatening to sue, forcing Condec into bankruptcy, which would have been an embarrassment in any Farley political future. Moreover, Farley had borrowed from Farley, Inc., in order to advance funds to Condec. Now, by the magic of debt, all these problems were solved. The Condec bondholders were offered twenty-five cents on the dollar (better than nothing) for their bonds. The preferred stock was redeemed. A thirteen-million-dollar obligation of Farley's to Farley, Inc., was forgiven. About thirty-two million dollars in bank debt was paid down. And approximately a hundred and fifty-five million dollars more was used to redeem some outstanding junk bonds, replacing them with new ones.

Under Milken's tutelage, Farley has learned to use debt not only to finance enormous acquisitions but also to cure—or, at least, palliate—the problems that acquisitions spawn. In the pre-Milken era, Farley did his small LBOs, but in these he utilized bank or finance-company debt, which had to be reduced within a relatively short period. Once Farley had achieved his link with Drexel, however, he entered a new, easy-money world, in which—barring staggering losses by a company—it is always possible to return to the junk-bond till. One can "restructure" (a byword of the eighties), replacing those securities that have high interest rates or short-term maturities with new bonds, often at lower rates and with maturities that extend further into the roseate future—or even with equity (if a company is in truly dire straits and cannot pay any interest). Although Milken was the arch-practitioner of restructuring, the concept, along with that of junk bonds, has been appropriated by the rest of Wall Street—a move facilitated by a general attitude of increased forbearance on the part of creditors. Today, even some commercial-bank debt may be more readily extended.

"The beauty of debt is that it can be serviced with interest only, and you have the ability to perpetually put off the day of reckoning," one entrepreneur who has issued junk bonds through Drexel told me. "No one exemplifies that better than Farley. You might say, 'A rolling loan bears no loss.' "

This is, of course, another reason that Farley could comfortably make a bid for West Point-Pepperell which was higher than anyone else's: if things don't go according to his plan (but are not utterly disastrous), he will simply restructure. His projections can therefore be relatively relaxed and open-ended. Lanier told me, "If I were going to run the company after a buyout, I would be intent on reducing the bulk of the debt as quickly as I could. It's a different attitude."

Such subtleties were lost upon many of the West Point-Pepperell employees in the Valley. The thought of Joe Lanier's being beaten was inconceivable, and many conjectured that he must have chosen to walk away—that he had abandoned them. When I visited West Point, Georgia, nearly three months after Farley's victory, the community was still reeling. In early May, about a hundred and fifty employees at the company headquarters were summarily dismissed (many were given just a few hours to vacate the premises). Since then, the number has doubled, and more firings are expected. Most of these people—medical staff, computer technicians, engineers, and adminis-

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trative workers—will probably have to move from the Valley, because there is a dearth of such white-collar jobs there, and they anticipate having trouble selling their homes, because there will be a broad exodus of the middle class.

Margaret Stephenson, a paralegal, who was also in charge of the company's Fifty-Year Club, said to me, "I always knew I could be fired for cause, but I never thought I'd be fired just for *being* there, after being a loyal, hard-working employee for thirty-six years. I never even thought about having to find another job—don't even have a résumé. I'm fifty-five—too young to retire and too old for most people to want to hire. So it's—awkward. It feels like there's been a death."

Lanier has set up a small office on the second floor of a building on West Point's ramshackle Main Street, over a small clothing store. About his loss to Farley, he observed, "This was a world-class company, not a sick one. The return on its stock, including stock appreciation and dividends, was high: from 1985 to 1988, before Farley took his position, it was at a compound rate in excess of twenty-three per cent a year. The company had just been positioned to be able to compete globally, with distribution set up in Europe, the Far East, and South America. We had built these values into the company. And then to get knocked out of this thing before we get to prove it . . . Intellectually, it screams for something to be done." He went on to make three suggestions that he thought would slow the pace of buyouts and, particularly, impede the highly leveraged acquirer: enforce the margin regulations; require a waiting period before allowing the consolidation of earnings or proceeds from the sale of assets into the balance sheet of the acquirer; allow investment bankers reasonable expenses and some fees, and then tax heavily the remainder of their fees. (Lanier believes that Wall Street is the catalyst for much of the buyout activity.)

West Point–Pepperell, of course, was a public company, owned by its shareholders and not by the dynastic Laniers; Joseph Lanier, Jr., owned less than one per cent of its stock. And he, having taken over J. P. Stevens, could not fail to appreciate this fact. But he insisted that while it would still have been painful to have West Point wrested from him by a solidly financed corporate acquirer, he would have felt much differently about that than he does about Farley's acquisition—"because," he said, "what remained would have been in better, stronger hands."

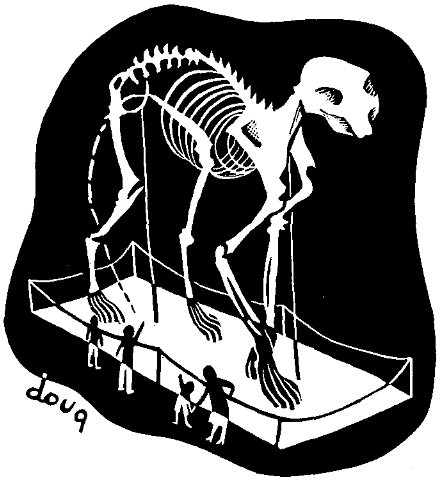
OTHER entrepreneurs whom Milken and Drexel potentiated in the mid-eighties—Carl Icahn, Ronald Perelman, Nelson Peltz—have done well, achieving definitive successes with their acquisitions and amassing immense fortunes. Each, in his own way, has sought the more elusive goal of respectability as well. Icahn writes prescriptive pieces for the *Times* and other publications on curing the ills of corporate America; Perelman maneuvers to gain entry into the rarefied realm of New York society; and Peltz, in an interview in the *Wall Street Journal*, likened himself to Andrew Carnegie. But not one of them has gone as far in his quest for the grail of legitimacy as Farley has.

Farley, having vaulted into the uppermost echelons of American business without any need to spend decades building a company or climbing a corporate ladder, contemplates attempting roughly the same thing in political life: eschewing the conventional course, and aiming straight for the top. Over the past five years or so, he has continually measured himself against those he considers potential Presidential candidates, and has become convinced that he can compete intellectually with the best of them. After one such comparative session with a high-ranking member of the Bush Administration, Farley returned to Chicago ebullient, a friend recalled. "Bill said, 'I *know* it. I am *destined* to be President,' " this friend told me.

Even many of those who had long known Farley to be a classic over-achiever—to have perpetually set himself the most improbable goals and, to their surprise, attained them—were startled when, in the fall of 1987, he began campaigning for the Democratic Presidential primary in Iowa. When I asked Farley who had encouraged him, he mentioned two people: his father, John Farley, and John Albertine, a former lobbyist, who is now the vice-chairman of Farley, Inc. John Farley, however, told me that he had done everything he could to discourage his son, because he thought Bill did not have the requisite experience. On the other hand, Albertine—who several Farley associates say was brought into the company, in 1986, in order to assist Farley in the political world—was indeed enthusiastic. As one reason for having encouraged Farley to run, Albertine cited the fact that in the fall of 1987 there was no obvious Democratic candidate. This may, indeed, have been the decisive factor in Farley's finally choosing a political party. Friends say that years earlier, when Farley discussed running for office, he had always been uncertain about which party to embrace, and that in 1986 he had seriously considered running for the Senate as a Republican, against the Illinois Democrat Alan Dixon. When I asked Albertine about Farley's fickleness, he replied, "Bill is not terribly, terribly partisan, and not terribly ideological. He tends to be a moderate."

In addition to the fact that a clear field beckoned in 1987, Albertine said, a second reason he encouraged Farley to run was his own belief that the time was ripe for a successful businessman to become President. Albertine still believes this. "One of the key issues today is: Are the Americans or the Japanese going to be No. 1 economically?" he told me. "Economics is dominating national concern in a way that it hasn't since the Great Depression. So we have a situation where a Wendell Willkie phenomenon is certainly possible." (Willkie, a businessman with no political experience, whom both Albertine and Farley frequently refer to as a precedent, ran as the Republican candidate in 1940. His candidacy for the nomination, however, was tied to an issue: he was an internationalist, while the other candidates for the Republican nomination were isolationists. And, of course, Willkie lost to Roosevelt in the general election.)

Farley ran a two-and-a-half-mil-



lion-dollar national television-advertising campaign, with a heavy dose in Iowa. Many of the commercials, starring Farley, were for Farley Industries—the umbrella conglomerate for most of the Farley companies—and some, paid for by Farley personally, featured him talking about what was wrong with the other Democratic candidates. (The line was thus blurred between what was and what was not political advertising; indeed, the bulk of the two-and-a-half-million-dollar bill was paid by Farley, Inc.) Several political consultants who watched Farley's efforts say he misjudged the nature of the Iowa Democratic primary, with its caucuses and its liberal, activist voters, failing to realize that they must be reached by arduous daily campaigning over a period of months, and not by television ads supplemented by some personal appearances.

In November of 1987, about two months after he began his campaign, Farley held a rally to announce that it was over. The press had not taken him seriously, he said, and state Democratic leaders had refused their support. Among his handicaps were lack of experience, the newness of his affiliation with the Democratic Party, and his personal life (he disclosed that he was in the midst of his third divorce and had one illegitimate daughter). Arthur Davis, who that fall had just stepped down as the chairman of the Iowa Democratic Party and is now its éminence grise, and whose support Farley had sought, told me, "There was no chance of my supporting him, because he lacked experience." Davis added, "And I saw no indication that there was any interest in him, except for a handful of people."

Farley vigorously disputes the notion that he dropped out because his chances were hopeless. "The major reason is that I realized that preparing to run for President is not a three-month project; it's a two-year project," he told me. "And I realized, too, that I would have to sell the businesses. The time was not right."

Farley, a wealthy Irish Catholic with a strong sense of his own physical attractiveness, apparently sees himself in kinship with former President John F. Kennedy. He likens his experience in Iowa to Kennedy's in 1956, when Kennedy appeared to have a chance of being chosen as Adlai Stevenson's running mate. "You have to run through these things once or twice," Farley said. "I bet when Kennedy missed running for Vice-President he thought to himself, If I had done this earlier I could have got it—I'm going to put things in place for 1960."

Farley has been putting things in place for some time—at least since the early eighties—but his efforts have become much more closely focussed of late. A friend of his insists that virtually everything he does figures on a methodical, long-range laundry list, including his acquisition of West Point-Pepperell; an attempt to reach a certain social stratum by buying homes in Vail and Kennebunk; travels to some of the world's hot spots, like the Mideast and Central America, and meetings with foreign leaders; efforts to establish his Democratic Party credentials by last year assuming a one-year term as the national chairman of the Business Roundtable, a fund-raising arm of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; and a donation of a hundred and ten thousand dollars to Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's recent campaign. "It is all part of the goal," Farley's friend assured me, "and the goal is the Oval Office."

In his determination to create a winning Presidential package, Farley has embarked upon a self-improvement program that has become something of a métier in itself. Farley told me he believes that one of the chief requisites for a President (besides having experience with global economics, and the conviction that America is, and should be, No. 1) is an ability to communicate, particularly on television. "Reagan had an incredible ability to communicate—and he was trained," Farley pointed out. Farley, for his part, has been trained by dress coaches, speech coaches, and image consultants. "Image is an important part of the package," he said. He told me he could see the benefit of his training when he compared a Fruit of the Loom television commercial made two years ago with one that was currently being shown. (In the current one, Farley—speaking as a C.E.O. and also running, performing chin-ups, and doing arm curls—does deliver a smoother, more polished performance.)

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everywhere apparent—in his commercials, in his references to it in casual conversation, and in photographs that cover the walls of his office, on the sixty-third floor of Chicago's Sears Tower, which feature Farley fishing, Farley rafting, Farley running, Farley working out with the White Sox (he is a part owner of the team). He is perpetually tanned, increasingly fit. His daily workout is said by friends to be the dominant feature of his schedule—one of the few appointments that he is sure to keep. "As I often say," Farley declared, flashing a smile—and indicating his torso, which during this interview, in his hotel suite, was clothed in a Fruit of the Loom sweatshirt and Fruit of the Loom red briefs—"I don't want to have a billion-dollar mind and a one-dollar body."

Farley evinces his concern for his image with no trace of self-consciousness but, rather, with an open, ingenuous enthusiasm that is a staple of his personality. Utterly self-absorbed, he seems to have no inner censor. Two people whose relationships with Farley have lapsed bemoan the fact that he has no outer censor, either, since he has surrounded himself with a coterie of employees who fan the flames of his vanity—making repeated references to his "charisma," and encouraging him to run for President. "He has a terminal case of hubris," one of these people said. "It is a disease of the mighty, and he is of the mighty—there is no one to restrain him, no one to tell him the truth."

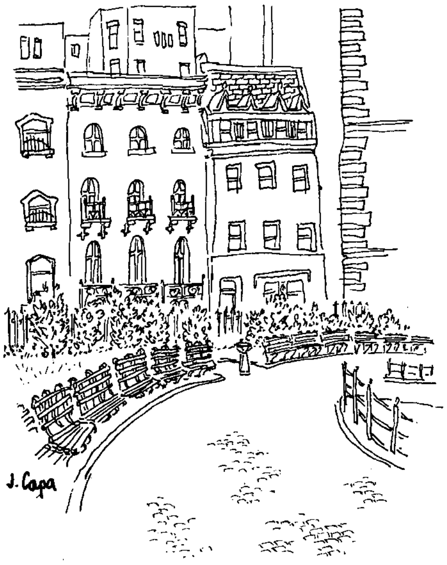
"I want to create companies in my own image," Farley told me, and this desire has given rise to "wellness" programs—often including aerobics, track, weight lifting, cholesterol checks, and sessions on how to quit smoking—in every Farley plant. Management meetings often start with a stretch-and-tone (modified aerobics) session. In his first appearance in front of West Point–Pepperell division heads after he acquired the company, Farley began by turning over the meeting to the wellness director of Farley Industries, Abby Burston, to present an overview of her programs. Burston, who was already known to some of these employees, because she had been Farley's first emissary to West Point, immediately after he won the company, is thirty years old and speaks about fitness with a zeal that rivals Farley's. "Bill felt bad that the people who really were hurt by the P.R. during the fight were the workers, who were afraid they'd lose their jobs," she told me. "So he said, 'Go down there, spend a week, tell them about Farley Industries.' Just touching and feeling and seeing alleviated a lot of the fears of these people."

"But aren't many of them in fact now losing their jobs?" I asked.

"That's life," she replied. "If we're going to make corporate America No. 1 again, it has to be done. I look at it like taking someone who's really out of shape, fat and bloated, and getting them started on a program. Well, that's what Bill is doing with these companies. He wants to get rid of the bloat."

There is no chord that Farley has struck more often—in his public speeches and in interviews with reporters—than that of his concern for his employees. In addition to establishing the fitness programs, he told me, when he takes over a company he always inspects the cafeteria and the rest rooms, and works to improve them. "An employee," Farley proclaimed, with the dramatic emphasis he reserves for his most timeworn platitudes, "should *not* be treated like a number."

A publicist who has known Farley for over a decade claims to recall the genesis of Farley's concern for his employees. In the late seventies, this man had a meeting with Farley, who had just begun to acquire companies but was even then looking ahead to a political career, perhaps as a senator. "We said to him, 'You have to think about who your allies are going to be. They can be your employees, the press, regulatory officials. You can go to the towns where you have plants, and talk about how concerned you are about your employees, and how deeply you feel for the town, maybe invest in civic projects.' And he just sort of listened and said, 'Good idea.' He had nothing to offer. It was someone else's idea—how he should play the employee crowd."



Farley's long, intensive preparation may yet produce a winning candidate—though not, in all likelihood, for the office he covets. A number of people involved in politics in Chicago believe that if he should lower his sights—to senator or governor, say—he could be formidable. "Farley's name comes up a lot," said William Daley, the brother of Richard Daley and the architect of his mayoral campaign. "He would have to sell his businesses first, of course. And he'd have to establish his credentials as a Democrat and assume a role on national issues. But he's got the money, he's got the looks, he's got a story—son of a mailman, built an empire. He's different—people are tired of politicians. And he can drop in ten million dollars. He's like the six-hundred-pound gorilla, sitting out there."

Though Farley told me that he wants to be President, he did not rule out the possibility of running for either senator or governor first. There has, in fact, been some talk in Chicago political circles about his running for governor of Illinois in 1990, and he mentioned this in a conversation we had this spring.

"But having just acquired West Point, surely you can't?" I said.

"Never say 'can't,' " Farley remonstrated.

Relentless positivism has been the guiding force—and the springboard—of his life. Though he practiced garden-variety positive thinking when he was an encyclopedia salesman (he read, for example, "Think and Grow Rich," by Napoleon Hill), over the last several years that approach has evolved into the technique of imaging. "I *see* myself winning," Farley explained. "I *knew* I would win West Point. Having the confidence that you will win acts on your subconscious. You open certain doors you wouldn't otherwise. Because of my attitude, for example, I could convince Drexel that the deal would work at fifty-eight dollars a share."

It is odd, in view of the intensity of

Farley's desire for political life, and his efforts to transform himself into a perfectly polished package, that some of his blemishes are of his own making. The issue of his personal life, which surfaced in Iowa, has become increasingly visible. Farley, at forty-six, seems to favor beauty queens in their twenties. ("I make it a rule never to date a woman over thirty-two," he told me.) He was a judge in the 1988 Miss America contest, and is now dating Miss America, whom he escorted to the Inaugural Ball.

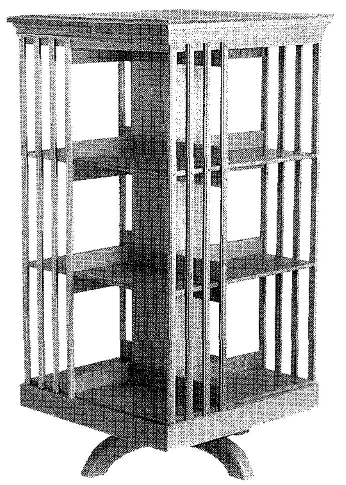
Farley acknowledged that his personal life would be likely to draw some fire in any future campaign. Lapsing sometimes into the second and sometimes into the third person, as he often does when he is talking about himself, he said, "You'll have a tremendous record, and for the right reason—not just for wealth but to make it better for other people, your employees. They'll say, 'He's never done it before. And he's been married three times.' They're going to go for the jugular. But what else *can* they say?" He smiled disdainfully. "That he's ugly? That he's inarticulate? That he's not smart?"

TODAY, Farley is poised on a high wire over a yawning abyss of more than four and a half billion dollars of debt. For him, everything—his political ambitions, his reputation in the business world, and, to some degree, his wealth—now hinges on what he does with West Point–Pepperell. He intends to apply the same strategy there that worked so well for him in his acquisition of Northwest Industries: to sell off the bulk of West Point's divisions, put John Holland and his Fruit of the Loom managers in charge of operations, and invest heavily in the remaining businesses. For example, Farley has already set a goal for Alamac, manufacturers of knitted-apparel fabric: he promises he will double sales and earnings over a period of about three years, while investing roughly ninety million dollars. When I asked Farley where the ninety million would come from—since he must come up with $1.3 billion to repay the West Point–Pepperell bank debt within two years, and it does not seem plausible that he will be able to raise that much by selling off divisions—he said that it could come from cutting costs and increasing profits. "Or," he added equably, "we can borrow more."

Farley now commands the attention of many people on Wall Street and in the business community—the kind of attention that any death-defying performer commands. To some degree, these spectators' bets on whether or not he will make it are a litmus test of their attitudes toward this decade's enormous leveraging of corporate America. The more conservative, who have watched disapprovingly as he used leverage to rise so precipitately, are now waiting for an equally precipitate fall. Others—particularly those investment bankers who have been close to the heated M. & A. action (and have done their level best to keep it going)—regard him with some fascination, and not a little envy: he has done what they would have done if they had dared. One young M. & A. lawyer, Marc Wolinsky, who defended West Point–Pepperell in its battle against Farley, seemed a bit awed by Farley's derring-do. "It's an accomplishment for someone who has borrowed as much on as little equity as he has," Wolinsky said. "I admire him for getting away with it."

Beyond the matter of his risk-taking lies the more fundamental debate about Farley, which, like its subject, is unshadowed by nuance: Is he a "lucky egomaniac," as one Chicago entrepreneur phrased it, or a businessman with an eye for value? That is to say, while he is not, according to several who have watched him up close, a skilled operator of companies, does he have a keen instinct for what new directions a company should take, and what companies to buy and sell? And has he perhaps found his niche in consumer products, such as Fruit of the Loom's and West Point's? Ilan Kaufthal, Farley's old friend from NL Industries, told me, "The story is not yet over. I thought Anaheim Citrus was not good—it turned out to be good. I thought Doehler-Jarvis was not good—he called it right on the money. On Fruit of the Loom, he's been right so far. Of course he's overleveraged, and he is now in a very, very precarious situation. But he shoestringed no money—twenty-five thousand dollars—into an empire of this size. How many others have done that? So we owe him the last chapter of the story, in West Point. That will tell whether he was right or wrong."

Estimates of Farley's net worth are as much up in the air as the end of his



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story. *Forbes'* 1984 list of the four hundred richest people in the United States estimated his net worth at a hundred and fifty million dollars; its 1985 list estimated two hundred and fifty million; *Forbes* dropped him from its list the following year. In early 1988, during Farley's divorce negotiations, his lawyer represented him as insolvent. "I saw one work sheet that put his net worth at negative thirty million dollars," one person has told me. Somebody who has recently reviewed Farley's finances estimates his net worth at between forty and seventy million dollars.

This much is clear: the only asset of real size that Farley owns personally—not through the Byzantine and debt-shadowed structure of Farley, Inc.—is about six million shares of Fruit of the Loom stock, with a current market value of roughly seventy million dollars. Though for years Farley's practice was to take virtually all his profits and push them back to the center of the table, that Fruit of the Loom stock has been set aside. When I asked him whether he thought he could still lose everything, he responded that because of that equity stake in Fruit of the Loom he couldn't conceive of it anymore.

Others, of course, still can—and not just the Farley detractors. "Not long ago, I gave my mother and father a large amount of cash," Farley told me. "They put it in the bank, wrote a new will, and left it all to me." He added, with a smile, "They've always thought that I was going to go bankrupt."

—CONNIE BRUCK

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DANCING

The Shock of the Old

THE Kirov Ballet first presented "The Sleeping Beauty" in New York during its début season, in 1961. Among my earliest and fondest memories of ballet are the sweet, powdery eighteenth-century colors and the vibrant young dancers—Sizova or Kolpakova as Princess Aurora, Soloviev as Prince Désiré, Makarova as the Bluebird's Princess Florine. But I see by the notes I made at the time that the production was a great disappointment, lacking in grandeur and dramatic substance, narrowly reliant on dancing, too inclined to substitute it for mime. I knew "The Sleeping Beauty" from the Royal Ballet. That version, designed by Oliver Messel, is another fond memory, but here I am in 1961 complaining that "neither production is satisfactory; the Kirov seems too stripped, the Royal too fussy." Rather vaguely, I described the latter production as one that "tries for maximum contrasts, in each act, of mime with dance with spectacle." I think I must have meant that the Kirov was trying not for contrast but for simple alternation, because that's what it was still doing this season at the Met. If it still categorically prefers dancing to mime, that is because it is apparently convinced, first, that the two have nothing to do with each other, and, second, that whatever mime is worth doing is worth doing badly. Of the main mime characters in "The Sleeping Beauty," the Kirov's King is weak, its Cattalabutte is wishy-washy, and its Carabosse is the stock figure of the Witch, indistinguishable from Madge in "La Sylphide." She *is* Madge, of course, but Tchaikovsky, not Løvenskjold, is writing the character now.

As the Kirov produces it, "The Sleeping Beauty" simply isn't believable. Believability in the Tchaikovsky classics is established by an accord with Tchaikovsky's rhythm, which regulates a constantly changing ratio of lyrical to dramatic effects in both dance and mime. But the Kirov divides each of the first two acts of "The Sleeping Beauty" into rigid units of storytelling mime and pure dance. It keeps alternating units as long as it can, which is until the Panorama and the scenic part of the ballet, whereupon the production collapses into redundancy. There is no need for Carabosse to return with her curse or for the Prince to fight monsters. The ballet was exquisitely engineered by its makers to avoid disproportionate emphasis of this kind. In each of the acts, a climactic pas d'action (adagio with variations) expresses the ideal synthesis of dance and drama. The Kirov makes this synthesis visible only in the Rose Adagio and, to a lesser extent, in the Vision scene. The pattern of synthesis—the ongoing rhythmic cross-weave of the dramatic effects of dance against the lyrical effects of mime—isn't there at all. The production strives instead to keep formal distinctions as clear as possible. The Lilac Fairy expresses herself exclusively in dance steps and poses, and a mighty bore she is, trailing around the palace precincts in her long lavender negligee. Fyodor Lopukhov, who produced a famous revival for this company in 1922, was scathing on the subject of the Lilac Fairy's overcomplicated mime speeches, but did he decree that she should not talk at all? Her repeated piqué arabesque is a pathetically inadequate substitute; it's as if she were somebody who opens her mouth but never speaks.

The current Kirov production bears the same credits as the previous one—staging by Konstantin Sergeyev, designs by Simon Virsaladze. Although it is supposed to have undergone revisions sometime in the early eighties, reading over my notes on the 1961 season I realize that little has changed. The long pure-dance pas de deux that Sergeyev introduced in place of Petipa's Vision scene is gone, and the old corps, with its allées and mazes and fountains, has been restored. But the sagging tempi, the ponderous device of gates opening and closing the acts, the perfunctory treatment of the Panorama are still there. The production being seen this season is a touring version, heavily cut. A videocassette issued in 1983 of a performance on the stage of the Kirov Theatre (with Kolpakova still a lovely Aurora) reveals a suite of court dances in Act II and a completely staged Panorama, in which the Lilac Fairy's boat crosses upstage behind a moving scrim of foliage. (It's too dark to see whether the autumn foliage changes as the seasons roll back to spring, but the sense of the scene is that the Prince travels in time as well as in space.) The gates close, and open on the court asleep beneath a giant spiderweb. Aurora is on her bed; Carabosse, alert in the stillness, crouches with her retinue. As the music gradually brightens, there is a sequence of entrances: the Lilac Fairy's attendants, Lilac herself, and then—a great moment—the Prince appears at the top of a staircase, sword in hand. This wasn't shown at the Met. All we saw was the beginning of the Panorama, with the boat setting out, and then the overactive second half of the Awakening—the Prince leaping across the front of the stage, slashing at monsters, the spiderweb rising, the Prince rushing to Aurora's side and bestowing the kiss. We saw a reduced version of the pantomime march that opens Act III and brings on the court, the royals, the four jewel fairies, and, lastly, Aurora and Désiré. (To keep up the desired symmetry, the next set of entrances, which takes place to the polonaise, is determinedly a *danced* set of entrances, with the Bluebird, Red Riding Hood, and the others quoting bits from the dances that they are to perform in this act. Like the sung recitatives in "Carmen," these entrances give away all the tunes.) Deleted wedding dances include two in which children take part—Tom Thumb and his brothers, and the Intrada to the pas de deux, danced entrancingly in the film by the four fairies with the pages of the court. The decision to leave the children home meant also that there could be none in the Garland Waltz, where they are badly missed; the waltz, reduced to background balancés in place, looks quite pointless without them.

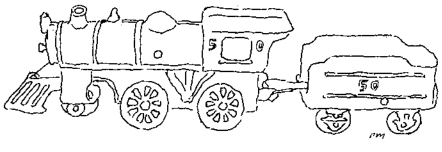
The production appears to have been cut to the bone, yet it plays long—the result of economizing in the wrong places. Act II opens with a scene that was not in the 1983 taped performance or in the old version: the King con-

demning and then forgiving miscreants who bring spindles into the realm. Not only is this, too, redundant—the Prologue ended with the King banning spindles—but it is a *mime* scene and therefore poorly done, dragged out and confusing. To give us this, the company sacrificed its five court dances, which would have brought onto the stage some badly needed male talent. All the major cuts are in Acts II and III; as the evening goes on, it gets thinner and scrappier. But it has been a structural disaster from the start. The Kirov gives us images, and many are charming. The sets, storybook Versailles, are quite good. The wigs and costumes—those for the men, anyway—have dash and flavor. The women look like the chorus of an early Hollywood musical; perhaps they're still under the spell of that twenties production. But even if the company had been able to present its production complete, pictorial continuity isn't what a ballet is made of. A constant restrictive either-or use of dance and mime builds up no kind of support for the final act, the wedding divertissement. Though the story is over, it is meant to go on telling itself in our minds, wrapping around the dances, feeling out their secrets of tenderness and truth. The Kirov dancers are exposed in this act—you feel they're doing well if they can get you to tolerate this much more dancing. Their fate is shared by the other companies that perform "The Sleeping Beauty" today. The Royal version has long since been replaced, its inspiration lost; American Ballet Theatre could not revive it. The Bolshoi revival of the seventies was, well, the Bolshoi. The Kirov is not a whole lot worse than these other companies, but its categorical extremist-formalistic approach to the ballet states more forcefully than anything we've yet seen the misapprehensions that have dismantled a classic. Next January, "The Sleeping Beauty" reaches its centenary. Is there a prayer in the world that it will be awakened in time?

The generation of Kolpakova and Makarova, of Sizova and Soloviev (and of Nureyev, whose defection had occurred just before the New York début season), seems golden in retrospect, yet there were mediocre principal dancers as well as great ones on the Met stage that season. I'm prepared to believe in what Makarova, in her autobiography, lamented as a general decline in teaching and coaching, but I suspect that the best of the Kirov's dancers today would have looked pretty good next to the young Makarova. The problem is one of isolation. The sixties saw a wave of fresh new talent emerging in ballet companies around the world. The Kirov failed to keep up with this international vanguard; its only concession to new standards was to expand the scale on which it danced. Meanwhile, its teaching and coaching congealed into pedantry. When Baryshnikov left, it was the final blow to an institution that had been suffering a drain in talent ever since the Diaghilev era.

Today, the company has a new, competitive spirit, and I suppose that's good, but it seems to be governed by Olympics-style considerations. All season long, I looked at the stage hoping to glimpse an illusion and found myself counting pirouettes. Not very attractive pirouettes, either. In general, Kirov technique tends to widen and pull back the pelvis, and center the balance so as to keep its maneuverability in check from hip to toe. It is a slow technique. Legs splay or turn in, and the rudimentary use of the foot is especially distressing to see in women. In spite of technical limitations, many of the dancers performed with spirit and some with brilliance. Young Zhanna Ayupova alone consistently went beyond quantifiable technique. When, in the middle of the Rose Adagio, she performed, unsupported, two and a half *turns à la seconde*, it was a demonstration of Aurora's sovereignty, not of Ayupova's skill. But not even Ayupova was able to overcome the company's low musical standards. The Kirov is an institution beset by contradictions; it veers this way and that on casting, on style, on politics, but it is unwaveringly indifferent to musical values. Tchaikovsky, who glorified ballet music, is abused right along with Minkus, Pugni, and the tunesmiths who possessed it before him.

The Kirov hierarchy is also peculiar: one is either a principal dancer or a corps member; officially, there are no demi-soloists. A principal dancer who is willing to dance demi roles gets seen often; Irina Chistyakova was in that sense the star of the season. But the ones you really want to see in demi roles are the ones who, like Ayupova, are on their way up out of them or, like Veronika Ivanova, soon could be. And on the second level of the Petipa repertory these roles are often richer than the ballerina roles. Nikiya, in "La Bayadère," Medora and even Gulnare, in "Le Corsaire," are hazy and undetailed conceptions compared with the Three Shades and the Three Odalisques. I suspect it's because the big roles are the ones that aging ballerinas have clung to and weakened, while the subsidiary roles retain some sort of challenge, even today. But what is there to say about the Kirov system at this point? It produces Petipa ballerinas who inherit roles emptied of any incitement to dance them except the relief they provide from Giselle, Aurora, or the Swan Queen. To be a Petipa ballerina in 1989 is to be facing backward against the tide of a triumphantly twentieth-century art form. This is not to say that Petipa classicism is so far out of date that it must be abandoned. The way to serve Petipa is not with crude and limited dance technique and debased musical standards. If the Kirov really had strength in the Petipa repertory, its acquisition of two Balanchine ballets would be more than the latest eye-catching demonstration of cultural *glasnost*. Balanchine acknowledged his descent from Petipa, and one of the ballets acquired by the Kirov, "Theme and Variations," is a fantasy on "The Sleeping Beauty." "Petipa" is really a synonym for classical style, the enduring elements of which passed from Russia to the West fifty years ago. Now it is time to pass them back. But how does a company that can't communicate the dynamic of "The Sleeping Beauty"—a company that after this season one is justified in calling the least musical classical company in the world—dance Balanchine? The answer is: Very, very carefully.



The experiment came on the last day of the season and was carried out twice, in matinée and evening performances. "Scotch Symphony" was first. There was a big colorful set and a lot of pink and red plaid in the costumes. The tams were all worn high and flat, like mortarboards. In the first movement, the dancers couldn't get off their feet fast enough; the very air they moved in seemed to have turned to glue. Chistyakova danced the Scotch Girl in her capable, muscular way. The second movement brought on People's Artist Galina Mezentseva to be partnered gamely but lackadaisically by Yevgeni Neff. Immediately, it was obvious that a Balanchine adagio and a Petipa adagio are worlds apart compositionally; compared with the long rolling periods of Balanchine, Petipa is all passagework. Mezentseva danced the role in sections. She divided the longest phrases, thinned down the parts, and gave them equal value. Her manner was forthright; she did not interpret, she did not try to suffer. She passed the test, and so did the company. By the third movement, everyone seemed to have relaxed enough to *dance*, just a bit. It was an icebreaker of a performance. But a greater test lay ahead. The Mendelssohn score for "Scotch Symphony" is in large sections with little variation in tempo; the score for "Theme and Variations" (from Tchaikovsky's third orchestral suite) is composed in slivers, each with its own tempo. In "Paquita," a kind of Petipa "Theme and Variations" set to Minkus, the conductor followed the dancers; here they would have to follow him. Dzhemal Dalgat, whose hectic tempi all season seemed to go beyond the call of duty, held to Balanchine's markings in "Scotch" and, amazingly enough, in "Theme."

The performance of "Theme" proved how much better it is to dance to a prescribed tempo than to make one up. Dancers on their own can only get slower, and they turn unremarkable step combinations into difficult exercises that interest no one but themselves. In "La Bayadère" I had seen Altynai Asylmuratova take an eternity to lift her right leg and deploy it at hard angles to the body and grimly raise herself onto point. Lost in this hydraulic nightmare, stretched beyond recognition, was a silly little Minkus tune and a simple fouetté transition from développé à la seconde into arabesque allongée. Now, on the last day of the season, I was seeing the same dancer collected and mobilized and making instantaneous connections to music that was as serious as she was, and nothing looked odd or difficult. In one variation, holding hands with the women on either side, she took a slow series of poses on point, passing and extending one leg now forward, now back, facing the audience, facing away, bending deeply in profile. It was a Cubistic version of the Petipa passage in which the Lilac Fairy—a role Asylmuratova has danced—is braced in arabesque by the other fairies. (The resemblance is strengthened by the fact that the Kirov's fairies perform their adagio without cavaliers.) It was complex, it was no doubt taxing, and it was beautiful.

When did the Kirov decide that classical dancing had to look arduous? Nureyev startled the West with that idea, but we thought it was his alone. Arduousness became Nureyev: it enhanced his masculinity; it made a mountain-climbing expedition of every solo. When Makarova defected, she brought with her those creaky musical tempi, but her dancing was delicate and airy, the opposite of arduous. Asylmuratova's generation of ballerinas is Nureyevian; she is the one among them who is genuinely grand and also musically aware. In the pas de deux of "Theme," once more the heavy air closed in; the élancé passages lost all their edges and turned legato; the choreography took on a deep dusky color—and it was all as wonderful as if it had been planned that way. The partnering of Konstantin Zaklinsky was crucial, but Asylmuratova's ear helped her quite as much. The performance ended in triumph. Balanchine didn't exactly make a new woman of Asylmuratova, but he lightened her up considerably, made her subtle and various, and filled her Cleopatra broodiness with repose. Zaklinsky coped gallantly with his solos and led the men in style; he's a much better dancer than he seems to take himself for. The piece was cast to the hilt. In the demi roles were Ivanova (who looks Balanchinean in everything), Elvira Krylova, Irina Sitnikova, and Natalya Pavlova. Kirill Melnikov, twice a Désiré this season, was one of the cavaliers. They all danced in front of a view of the blue-draped interior of the Kirov Theatre—the House of Petipa, the cradle of Balanchine. The costumes, trimmed in silver and gilt, were too flashy, but then this was a flashy occasion, a glimpse of history in foreshortened perspective. St. Petersburg style was returning to Leningrad by way of New York, and with a daredevil suddenness that baffled the senses.

In between "Scotch" and "Theme"

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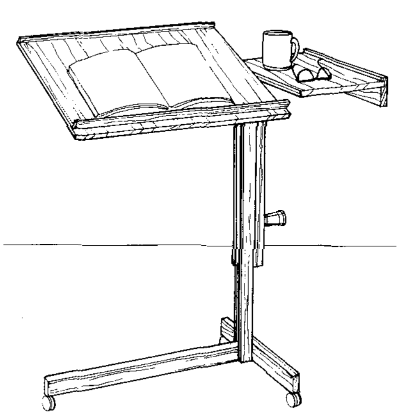

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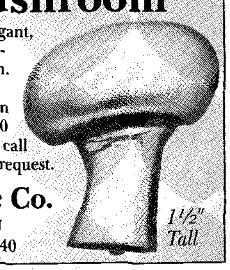

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there was a program of "contemporary" works by Soviet choreographers *that revealed how deep is the gulf* between their understanding of the term and ours. To them contemporary dance seems to mean emotional flailing and wormy plastique, couples huddling and rolling in balls, men strutting with bare chests, women pounding their skulls in torment. These pieces didn't evoke a faded modernity; they lay outside art, outside time. The idea of a contemporary classicism must sit oddly in a country where classical means rules and punishment, contemporary means no rules and punishment. What future has the light, free, objective style of Balanchine next to the heavy thing that these people have made of Petipa?

In the evening, Yelena Pankova and Yuri Zhukov danced "Scotch Symphony." Younger than the matinée pair, these dancers had legs and confidence; they made me feel I was watching a performance, not an experiment. In "Theme," the corps danced nobly, at the end of its strength. There was a young ballerina we'd never seen before, Larisa Lezhnina, who gave a firmly outlined performance of no particular quality, maybe because she was rudely partnered by Farukh Ruzimatov. The evening ended with cheers and flowers for the company, its director, and its coaching staff. Suzanne Farrell, who staged "Scotch," and Francia Russell, who staged "Theme," received separate ovations.

The company had taken a crash course in Balanchine and done well on the finals. Now what? Is there a prospect before us? Acquiring Balanchine could mean several things to the Russians. It could mean that they adapt elements of the style to sharpen up their Petipa, meanwhile converting Balanchine into something more comfortable to dance, like "Paquita." Even to do that much, they'd have to see Balanchine as organically connected to Petipa, not as some newfangled Amerikanski luxury item. Ballerinas are realists. When Kirov ballerinas complain publicly, as they're now allowed to, that they have nothing to dance, maybe they really mean that they want choreography created for them; and George Balanchine is dead. But some among them, serious as well as realistic, will surely see that his ballets represent their only hope of getting into the twentieth century while there still is one.

—ARLENE CROCE

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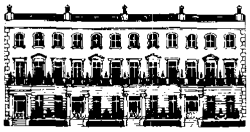

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BOOKS

Drawn to Figments and Occasion

Lucie Brock-Broido, in her first book, "A Hunger" (Knopf; $16.95), says of herself:

> Given my disposition, I will always be
> circuitous, precocious, an Embellisher. . . .
> Given my character, I will always be mercurial,
> a little sentimental, star-shaped & terrestrial.

The description rings true. Her poems are indeed circuitous, chiefly in their regression to childhood or girlhood; precocious, in their suffusing of a child's surreal perceptions with an adult knowingness; and embellished in fantastic and mercurial ways. She is terrestrial enough to write poems about (and in the imagined voices of) celebrities—Marilyn Monroe, Jessica McClure (the baby in the well), Birdie Africa (a child survivor of the police fire bombing of the MOVE cult in Philadelphia). And she is sentimental enough to write about lovers and relatives. But even these presumably mundane subjects have been tilted oddly toward a brazen freakishness:

> This work of mine . . .
> It's peopled by Wizards, the Forlorn,
> The Awkward, the Blinkers, the Spoon-Fingered, Agnostic Lispers,
> Stutterers of Prayer, the Flatulent, the Closet Weepers,
> The Charlatans. I am one of those.

This list of capitalized categories escapes self-parody only by espousing it, in a deliberately stylized version of Anne Sexton out of Disney. Brock-Broido is intent on an apparent factuality (history, the newspapers, quotations from *People*) but is all the while skittering off into the more unreliable forms of pictorial, fabular, and linguistic distortion. The poems leap off the page.

Brock-Broido is a Briggs-Copeland Lecturer in Poetry at Harvard, where an appointment committee, of which I was one, hired her on the basis of the manuscript of "A Hunger." Among other things, we liked her slangy and morose self-mockery, as in "Autobiography," which is set in a rented room:

> It is only three o'clock & already I'm alone
> Listening to the lovers next door
> Like Patsy Cline & her Man
> Throwing barebacked wooden furniture
> Like the real life bicker of true love.
> I love that hands-on,
> Die-while-you're-dark-haired-still
> & young, fists curled to desire,
> Take Me kind of love.
> They'll make love without apology
> & I'll be left to the afternoon
> & the autoerotic sounds of my American voice
> Getting it all down.

The poet could just as well be the quarrelling, love-driven girl next door—or maybe she once was. The ruefulness of self-inquiry saves the satire. Elsewhere, the poems often take on, by a hypnotic ventriloquism, the imagined voices of desperate or abandoned children. Here is Birdie Africa, child of the MOVE cult, holed up against the police:

> There are other children now.
> We run like wild
> animals. We let our hair go
> into puzzles which will never be unraveled.
> We let our teeth go fierce.
> We leave dirt in our palms
> & sleep without nightclothes.
> We pee in the yards & eat raw things.

Brock-Broido offers a witty running commentary on the clichés and terrors of contemporary America—ozone holes, the eschatological fantasy of Rapture, the taming of the American male:

> There's a puncture in the southern reaches
> Of the earth's protective atmosphere. I'm trying
> To be moved by this, but I'm more piqued by Rapture now. . . .
>
> Your new woman is Easy on the Eye, you say. Since this recent
> Nomenclature for the Wind Chill, the world's a colder place . . .
> You Montana
> Boys will marry one day after all, in small vehicular domiciles.

And yet, for all this contemporary chic, the poems are capable of suddenly sliding off the rails of "English" entirely, in ways that hope to reproduce the mind of the murderous or the mad (in the following quotation both, as one identical twin imagines murdering the other):

> *First of all, I wept to God*
> — when world is wet & shy, under the bridge, I hold her
> head down under
> water & I feel her thrash
> against me, just this once, I murder her,
> it's a once in a lifetime thing you know?
> You have no idea
> how much I love her, I am she.

Some of the hazards of Brock-Broido's enterprise are easily seen:

"A little further, dear."

preciousness, exaggeration, a histrionic use of the more sensational edges of the news. Other hazards, less immediately apparent, take an insidious toll in the long run—chiefly the persistent use of a few obsessive words, among them the adjectives "small," "little," "tiny," "frail," "fragile"; the nouns "child" and "girl"; the verb "curl." Brock-Broido's infant or adolescent personae, frail, vulnerable, or ill, are curled in a fetal self-protectiveness, forbidden full extension. They master their author—and are, in turn, partly or wholly mastered by her. The apparently unconscious repetition of the self-deprecating adjectives suggests an as yet incomplete control over psychic material.

Brock-Broido's talismanic words open into a magical territory of "Domestic Mysticism" (the title of the first poem). The "domestic" part is represented by the recognizable furnishings of our world, from saxophones to sno-cones, and among these furnishings women will recognize the apparatus of growing up as a girl: teacups, Dresden china, velvet curtains, bedroom windows, sewing, plants, eyelet-cotton dresses—to cite only the list from the opening poem. The "mystic" part of domestic mysticism appears in the slightly off-key manipulations of commonplace things, usually by metaphors (which I've italicized below) drawn from registers of reality radically different from the things they describe:

I could watch . . .
the quarries
Churning great chunks of marble

Those of us
whose eyes
By chance, genetics, *aptitude,* go down
On the ends will be perceived as perpetually sad.

the wanderers are
still *avenging*
their insomnia in the dark
false *hellebore* red of poolhalls,
in the allnight pastel *caves* of laundromats

the anorexic soul
In *spandex tights* slips out of bed with me

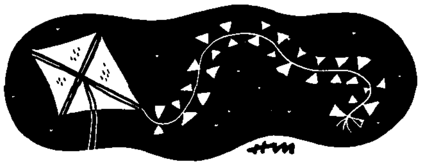
my sister & I would move *like spiders*
into the nests of our dotted swiss nightgowns

Brock-Broido may inherit some of her domestic mysticism from Theodore Roethke, who specialized in the elusive and evasive intuitive movements of a little child-soul alive in a world of greenhouse domesticity, a tendril-spirit baffled by the motions of an as yet uninterpreted fate. Roethke, I think, wanted to remain unconscious, but Brock-Broido's preverbal personae struggle crazily toward consciousness and, consequently, toward language. They find this struggle libidinally exciting. It is their means of individuation, their path toward what the Jessica McClure poem calls "personal geometry." After all, what happens to the self is arbitrary; it is only by following, interpreting, naming the affronts to the sensibility, living them over again, that the self establishes control over them. The poem "After the Grand Perhaps" traces affront—sensuous, sensual, or imaginative—as part of the passage toward consciousness:

After what is arbitrary: the hand grazing
something too sharp or fine, the word spoken
out of sleep, the buckling of the knees to cold,
the melting of the parts to want,
the design of the moon to cast
unfriendly light, the dazed shadow
of the self as it follows the self. . . .
After life there must be life.

This diction—with its unobtrusive debts to Keats and Yeats—is distanced by its ghostliness from what Northrop Frye would call the "low mimetic" style of American poetic realism (recently overworked); yet it is perfectly intelligible, without any fanciness of reference or surrealism of manner.

Brock-Broido's revelations about herself in "A Hunger" tend to be made obliquely, often by crosscutting. Some of these disclosures deal with anorexia. "I, myself, as you know," says the protagonist of the prose poem "Ten Years Apprenticeship in Fantasy," "have been starving alternately for a decade." "The anorexics," comments the speaker of "After the Grand Perhaps," "have curled into their geometric forms." And Baby Jessica, in the well, complains that she has wedged her right leg in "a notorious and irredeemable position," saying, "I hate to be unnatural, especially in personal geometry." Nonetheless, she adds, she will survive like "the small mythic creature I have always known I ought to be."



Baby Jessica is Brock-Broido's most complete, if most occluded, self-portrait. She boasts that she "can make the well's walls glitter/back at me." This may sound innocent enough, but the voice that Jessica eventually manufactures during her ordeal in the well has a jeering and sexually precocious awareness:

Big gangly weepy gamey men, Sweethearts & Insomniacs,
keep prodding me *to sing.*
And I sing.

And: *Move your foot for me, Juicy.*
And I wiggle it back for the man.

And: *How does a kitten go?*
And I go like a kitten goes, on

& on in that throaty liquid lewd bowlegged
voice like kittens make.
Then shut these big ole eyes.

It is a vulgar voice, a sardonic voice, a hardboiled voice:

In the matter of my toes, there has been damage done
but when I come back, they'll pinken up I'm sure
In America: *Hard Work & Prayer.*

It is even the voice of a priestess, one of Plath's queen bees:

Surrounded by jelly, an accoutrement of eros for ascent
from the well, I am born.
Wide eyed & swaddled in white linens, I emerge
pristine & preserved, like some Egyptian form.

Needless to say, this fantasy voice, damaged and preening, bears no mimetic relation to the real Jessica McClure. The incident of the baby in the well, one feels, was, like other *incidents provocateurs* in the book, the key that unlocked a Bluebeard's chamber in the poet's linguistic unconscious. There is a Grand Guignol relish in the act, as the perverse newborn speech breaks out:

I am born into the dark
rococo teratogenic rooms of the underground.

The deformations of language in the child-poems hint at the swollen terrors of the crushing birth-journey into identity, represented at its most sinister in the poem "Elective Mutes," about (actual) criminally insane identical female twins, who invented a private language by which to communicate with each other, remaining mute to the outside world. The poem could be called a violently skewed portrait of the female poet and her Muse, a hyped-up version of Stevens and his interior paramour, locked in a soliloquy "in which being there together is enough":

In summertime, when we were little, I remember we
walking with synchronized steps, a four-armed girl . . .
We were eleven, a shadow & a shadow
of her shadow.

Though the girls are British, Brock-Broido has them imagine an American adolescence—going to a drive-in, for example:

all the convertible tops
are down & the speakerbox hangs
on the rear view mirror like a locust,
slow & distorted like that
& you climb in back to have a boy
inside you, that's what I want, on the back seat
sprawling in the noises like an animal
he makes, but you're shy, you're bourgeois, you talk
American which I sort of like but it's kind of sleazy, you know?

The rhythmic momentum of this piece of Americana and the audacity of throwing it into a poem about mad English twins suggest the drivenness of Brock-Broido's imagination, which at other times can be delicate and lyrical. Here, for instance, is a spookily lyrical portrait of two American hands, one making change in a gas station, the other dealing drugs from behind a shop curtain in Harlem:

I love
these things too, the self serve
filling station where a pale hand
sneaks out making silver
change, or the one dark palm
in the meat shop on Amsterdam & 110th
behind the curtain handing out
the little envelopes of *Heartbeat*.

Something in Brock-Broido likes stealth, toxicity, wildness, neon—"perfect mean lines." This part valuably adds astringency to her passion for the beautiful. In the long farewell to a failed love affair, "I Wish You Love"—which is at the same time an elegy for her father—the sensational and lyrical halves of Brock-Broido's sensibility meet. A broken heart, death, the exhumed body of Mengele, ecological disaster, commercial slaughter, the humdrum, the extravagant, the technological, the distorted, the lyric all lurch together into an eclectic post-modern elegy:

After a death in the family
Gadgets go wrong for awhile; it's nothing
You shouldn't expect, the near-collapse of anything electrical
Or bound by heat or light. This is the gospel truth.

In the evangelic dusk
Way past the Bible belt, they're killing off
Large common beasts, shackle & hoist method.
Don't you think they know what's going on?
All of those old prophets were the same: doom, doom.
But most of all, When snowflakes fall

I wish you love.

These deaths, glitches, butcherings, and song snatches go on in terse but unstoppable six-line stanzas. Other hazards and griefs in "A Hunger" are presented within the manicured paragraphs of prose poems. The sheen of the arranged is lovingly applied to the fissures, accidents, crimes, and corpses of life, as if to say defiantly, "Well, that's what art is, isn't it?" To which the answer is yes and no: yes when the disjunction between the hysterias of life and the formalities of art is to be emphasized, no when the equally true continuity between consciousness and composition is the point to be made. Brock-Broido, now in her early thirties, will perhaps in other books make up different versions of the answer, putting her threatened and terrified childhood in a less varnished and steely cage. In this volume she tells us what she is up to:

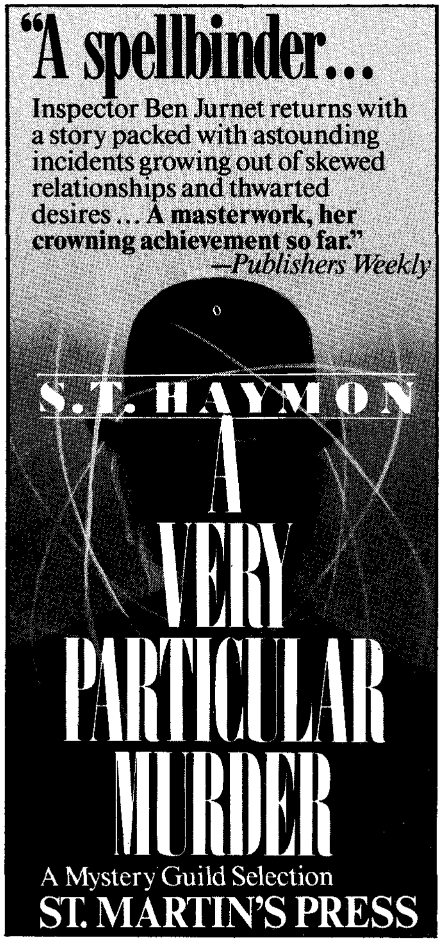
I am the medieval child in the basket, rocking.
Feigning sleep, up all night listening for secrets:
why there are punishments,
what news bad weather brings,
how things get winnowed out.

Will the child leave the rocking basket? Will she leave the restless, sheltering automobiles that are her grownup version of the basket? Will she loosen the tight stanzas that are the metrical equivalent of the basket? Will she become someone other than the little-small child-girl? The interest shown here in "getting it all down" suggests she will. "The psychic," as she says, "leaves the past":

sand covers Egypt,

Moves constantly to arrive at the streak
Of the yet-to-be.

This poet, "drawn to figments & occasion," has ornamented her book jacket with Carpaccio's "Dream of St. Ursula," in which the saint, asleep in her virginal fourposter (her relinquished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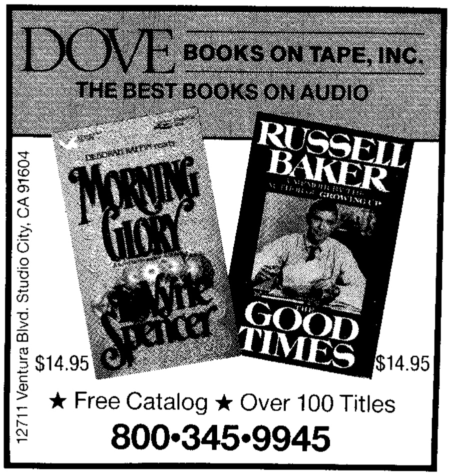
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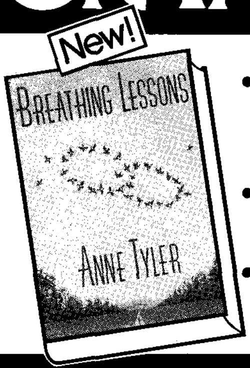
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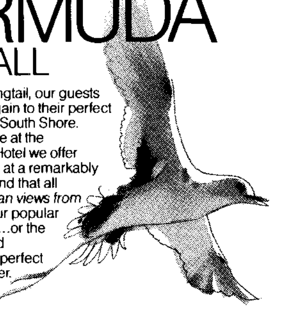
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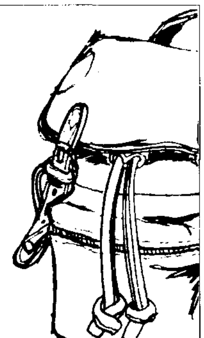
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book open on the reading table near the entrance to her chamber), is visited by an angel, forebodingly bearing toward her the palm of martyrdom. St. Ursula (already inserted into modern poetry by Stevens) seems to stand here for the virginal "domestic mysticism" associated with fasting, prayer, and meditation. To be fair to its own brilliant inspiration, this book should have borne on the other half of its jacket the beautiful, equally aloof, but awake and ravenous face of the Medusa.

—HELEN VENDLER

BRIEFLY NOTED

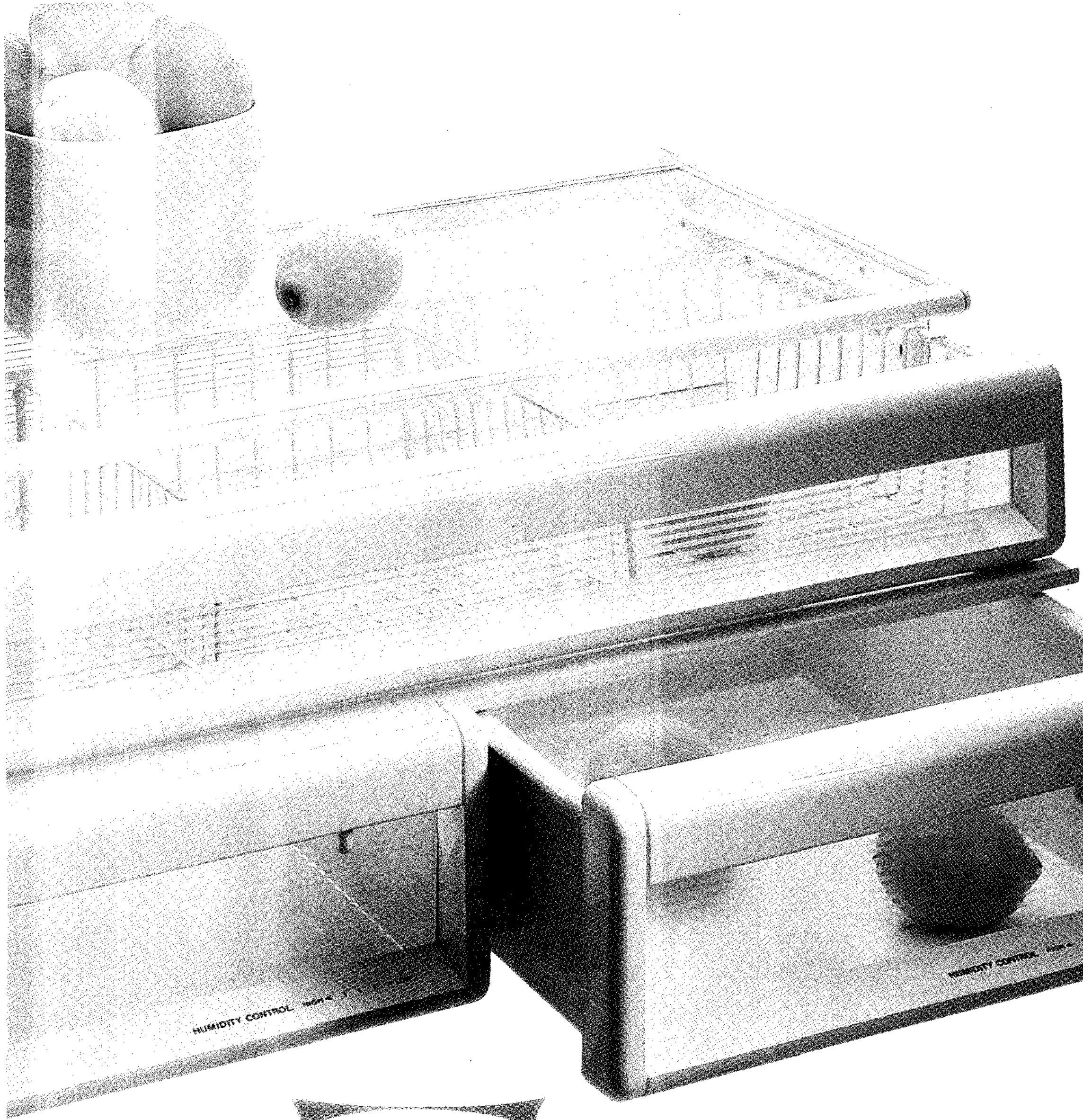
FICTION

SEE UNDER: LOVE, by David Grossman, translated from the Hebrew by Betsy Rosenberg (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $22.95). This huge, mesmerizing novel opens in the fifties, when the Israeli boy Momik hears murmurings about a "Nazi beast" from his parents, his crazy Grandfather Anshel, and other transplanted survivors of "over there." As an adult and writer, Momik, trying to make sense of this legacy, weaves a tale in which Anshel is the one prisoner mysteriously unable to die in the camp, despite the efforts of the commandant, Obersturmbannführer Neigel. When Neigel discovers that the immortal Jew is the once-famed author whose characters, a band of young do-gooders called the Children of the Heart, were beloved by him as a boy, he orders Anshel to write again, and divert him with nightly readings. Of course, Anshel (and, behind him, Momik, and, behind Momik, Mr. Grossman) "had hidden motives from the start": to turn the Nazi beast into a human being by the power of literature. The resulting bedtime story is revolutionary, not just in the impossible understanding it forges between Nazi and Jew but in the form it takes: Anshel, Momik, the aging Children of the Heart, and even Neigel speak directly to each other, crossing the boundaries of their respective "stories" to haggle about Fascism, freedom, and the goals and joys of art.

LEADER OF THE BAND, by Fay Weldon (Viking; $18.95). Weldon in her new novel seems to have taken up where her last novel left off. There the heroine ended by living with her love in a caravan beside the town dump; here a very different heroine runs off with a touring horn player, ostensibly to live in his van, more or less. Being a clever, well-regulated, efficient, and even popular (she has a TV show) astronomer—married to a lawyer—she is led to muse a great deal on the nature of love, life, women, men: "Our existence, if you pay it any attention, is unbearably distressing"; "I am the point where the mad, the bad and the infamous meet. I am an ordinary person, but carried to extremes"; and "What I marvel at now is how so happy so many of us manage to be, so much of the time." The novel is very short, ending where the Weldon fan would expect surprising complications to start tangling thick and fast. Since Weldon is invariably amusing and wise, only a fan would complain. Still, it is a little like sitting down to a game of chess and getting ticktacktoe.

GENERAL

A RING OF CONSPIRATORS: HENRY JAMES AND HIS LITERARY CIRCLE 1895-1915, by Miranda Seymour (Houghton Mifflin; $19.95). An animated study of the last twenty years of Henry James's life and career, beginning in 1895, a few years before the Master, fretted by the pressures of London, came to live in Lamb House, at Rye. The literary circle of the subtitle was the little company of writers who took houses in the neighborhood—H. G. Wells, Joseph Conrad, Stephen Crane, and Ford Madox Ford—and became intimates at Lamb House. The writers were friends, bicycling to and from each other's houses for teas, gossip, and parties, but there were serious disagreements among them, and a good amount of jealousy, hypocrisy, and malice. Ms. Seymour gives us sharply realized portrait sketches of the group, and at the same time keeps her focus on James, who is seen first as the country gentleman, relishing his role as the local squire, and then, as the new century failed to give him his due, slowly sinking into loneliness, neglect, and old age. A stimulating excursion into another time, lit up by sympathy and humor. Photographs.



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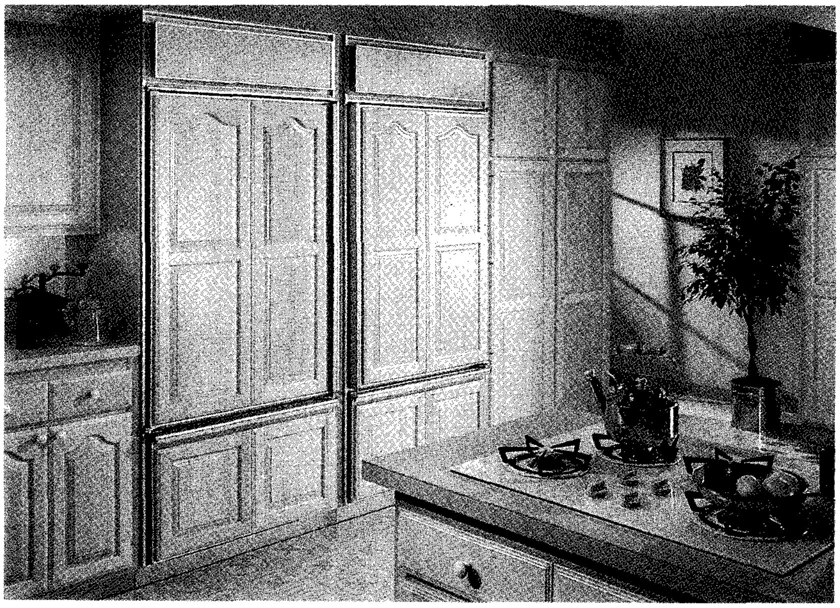

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